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Roof of the plateau

Veteran travelers share their tips on the ultimate 20-day road trip to the roof of the roof of the world.



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Housekeepers' secrets

Ayi have it rough. Many enter the industry ill prepared for basic housework – and for hiding the “shame” of their careers from family.

The naked truth



Few mediums have the artistic muscle to inspire social change like the documentary. If the form has a cradle, it is the Nordic Documentary Film Festival (NORDOX).

Since 2006, the top award-winning documentaries from NORDOX have been brought to the Chinese capital for yearly screenings. The 2010 lineup promises a fresh group of filmmakers' takes on international, cross-cultural and political themes.

Their universal message breaks down borders to show society for what it is, and for what it could be.

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Property cap to stop influx of hot money

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Shanghai blaze renews focus on fire safety

By Zhao Hongyi

A fire in a residential high-rise killed 53 residents and wounded 70 in Shanghai on Monday. Most were retired teachers and academics.

Their deaths have sparked renewed interest in fire safety protocols in similar buildings across the country.

Authorities found the fire in the 28-story building was started by an untrained operation of an electric welder. The building was being repaired and painted.

At a press conference in Shanghai, some people asked why the fire department did not use its powerful water hoses capable of reaching 300 meters into the air. The hoses were used in a routine exercise the day before. The fire chief denied that the hoses were suitable for use in such a residential high-rise and said the firefighters already did their best.

"The ideal weapon for fighting fires in high buildings over a height of 100 meters is the hydraulic water gun. We'll try to obtain more of this kind of equipment as soon as possible," the fire chief said.

The State Council issued a notice Tuesday asking local governments to check all building for fire sources and be prepared for disaster.

The Beijing municipal government declared that the period between November 16 and December 16 would be Fire Safety



Beijing is planning to inspect its own high-rise buildings to ensure Shanghai's disaster is not repeated. CFP Photo

Month. The government will send 100 teams to inspect fire preparedness in the capital's 18 districts and counties.

Inspection will focus on construction sites like those where the Shanghai fire originated. The delegates are being asked to educate residents in high-rise buildings about fire safety.

Beijing has more than 8,000 high-rise buildings, defined as those between 24 and 100 meters tall. Another 400 buildings are more than 100 meters tall.

"Considering the population in our country, the creation of these towers is unavoidable," Gou Zhongwen, vice mayor of Beijing, said. "All we can do is prepare well for the dangers fires pose to high buildings."

Wang Lixin, spokesman for the Shanghai Fire Fighting Bureau said that the country is designing and manufacturing hydraulic water guns to fight fires over 100 meters. The best guns can reach 300-400 meters high and are expected to be available during the next few years.

"The most important thing is to raise awareness of fires and escape skills," Zhao Zixin, supervisor of Beijing's fire brigade, said at the press meeting Wednesday.

The supervisor warned residents in high building to keep alert of possible fire disasters, monitor fire, gas and electricity use and plan an escape route in the case of a fire in their building.

State opens low-altitude airspace flights

By Li Zhixin

The State Department and the Military Commission of the Central Committee last Sunday passed a reform to low-altitude airspace management, drafted by the National Airspace Administration Committee.

The policy opens airspace under 1,000 meters to helicopters and under 4,000 meters to corporate jets. Flights higher than 4,000 meters will remain limited.

"The opening will stimulate demand for private aircraft in China," said Aengus Kelly, CEO of AERCAP, the world's largest aero leaser. "Private aircraft leasing, maintenance and related services will benefit a great deal [from this policy] in the future."

The giant has established a joint venture, "AERDRAGON," with China Aviation Supplies Import and Export Group Corporation and France's third-largest bank, Credit Agricole, in Beijing to expand the leasing market.

Since 2006, China has become the world's second largest aviation market. However, domestic aircraft leases have lagged.

"Between 60 and 80 percent of passenger aircraft rented by domestic airlines are owned by foreign agents," said Yue Yunlei, vice president of Alliance PKU Management Consultants. "The opening of low-altitude airspace gives domestic agents a chance to expand their strength."

Yue said China's private aircraft market is expected to grow 20 to 25 percent during the next decade.

According to the Civil Aviation Administration's statistics, there were 900 general aircraft in the country last year. These account for 13 percent of the total. China's 70 general aviation airports have an annual production value of 1.79 billion yuan.

The US, by contrast, has more than 230,000 general aircraft accounting for 90 percent of all aircraft. These fly out of 16,800 general aviation airports for an annual production value of 99.6 billion yuan.

According to the 2010 Hurun Report, more than one in six of China's 2,000 billionaires is planning to purchase or rent a private aircraft.

"The development space for China's general aviation is huge," Yue said. "In the next 15 years, the domestic demand for general aircraft will exceed 15,000 and the capacity."

Aviation training, research, development and manufacturing will also develop with the increased demand, he said.

City strengthens bid for UNESCO design title

By Liang Meilan

The 5th annual China Beijing International and Creative Industry Expo (ICCIE) opened Wednesday. The attached exhibition, which continues through the weekend, shows off achievements and trends in China's cultural creative industry.

This year's exhibition will focus on industrial design.

Candidates for this year's Red Star Award, China's highest award in design, are expected to cement Beijing's image and bolster its UNESCO bid to be recognized as the "City of Design."

The award, aimed at encouraging excellent designers, is for the first time open to foreign companies and designers. Judges from the UK, Germany, Australia, Finland, Korea, Japan and China will meet tomorrow for the final evaluations of the 227 items submitted by 1,072 companies from 15 countries.

Winning works will be displayed in 13 cities abroad.

The exhibition also welcomed the internationally-recognized German Red Dot Design Award event-Red Dot Night; 25 winning Chinese designers shared their experiences in industrial design at the event.



More than 100 activities will be held during the five-day expo. CFP Photo

Beijing is already the most competitive city in science and technology; today it is also experiencing rapid development in industrial design.

The country's first design trade market in October attracted 10 top industrial design companies from around the world. Frog Design in the US already announced its intent to open a Beijing branch. When all 10 companies open Beijing offices, the

city will have more top design companies than any other city in the world.

The industrial design industry enjoys competitive advantages in Beijing and huge market reach to other cities. There are more than 20,000 design organizations with 250,000 designers generating profits of 80 billion yuan yearly.

"China is a leading manufacturing power. That numerous

manufacturing enterprises can provide client resources for industrial design is a significant boon to the effort to turn 'made in China' into 'created in China,'" said Chen Dongliang, director of the Beijing Industrial Design Center.

The exhibition will be held in the sixth pavilion of the International Exhibition Center during the expo.

Wang Taihua, minister of the State Administration of Radio, Film and Television said at the opening ceremony of the expo that constant social development and improved purchasing power have created a boom in China's cultural industries. He attributed this to the competitive cultural market system and industry pattern that combines public ownership with more diversified forms of ownership.

For more than three years, China's cultural industry has maintained or surpassed 17 percent growth, Wang said. The industry is continually contributing more to national economic development, especially since the financial crisis, he said.

The five-day event will include more than 100 events, including exhibitions, forums and summits, trade promotions and comprehensive and creative activities.

Legal loopholes allow fetus gender test onto the market

By Han Manman

A service purporting to determine the genders of unborn children remains available online despite official condemnation of the business as illegal and unreliable.

Authorities, including the State Food and Drug Administration (SFDA), urged the public not to use the product, formerly sold at intelligender.com.cn.

The site offered a urine-based gender prediction test (GPT) from the US. The website claimed the test could determine the sex of an unborn child as early as 10 weeks into pregnancy with 90 percent accuracy.

Results from the in-home test take 10 minutes to develop. Results show green for a boy and orange for a girl.

The government disabled access to the website on Monday, but advertisements for its products remain available on many other shopping websites.

The products were popular despite never being approved for sale by Chinese authorities. Each test kit cost 800 yuan online, about three times its price in the US.

Intelligender was touted as a novelty in US drug stores for years. The US company's official website said the GPT is sold in "over 15 countries," but "[not in] China or India; nor do we license the sale of our product to either of these countries."

One netizen posting under the handle "sleepless cat" said the test said she would have a boy, confirming another type-B ultrasound check she had at the hospital.

However, another netizen said she got two different outcomes after using the product – it predicted a boy at 11 weeks, but a girl when she tested again at 19 weeks.



Any gender identification technique, including the use of ultrasound scans, is prohibited in China except for medical use. CFP Photo

"I don't think there is enough scientific proof to back its accuracy," said Zhao Wenqiu, a physician at the department of gynecology at Peking University Third Hospital.

Zhao said the two main ways to test for gender in hospitals are DNA testing and type-B ultrasound checks. DNA testing accurately reveals the gender, while the sound can only be used after the fifth month of pregnancy.

She said any gender identification, including the use of ultrasound scans, is prohibited in China except for medical use.

"However, some small clinics have violated this rule and helped with abortions when the gender is not to the parents' liking. In most cases, this means the baby was a girl," she said.

The halting of illegal pregnancy gender scans and discrimination against women are essential to curb China's gender imbalance, Zhao said. Many traditional parents prefer a boy, and gender identification tests result in the abortion of many girls.

Authorities seem at a loss for how to combat this problem.

An official from the SFDA who refused to be named told Xinhua that the SFDA only had the power to expose people who break the rules. It is not empowered to handle punishment.

Li Yeshun, secretary general of the China Association of Business Law, said that since the website claimed it was a registered company in the US and its branch was in Hong Kong, "it was difficult for the Chinese

government to punish."

"But our customs can monitor and confiscate its products when they enter the mainland from Hong Kong," Li said. "We also have the right to punish the people directly involved in domestic sales of the pregnancy test."

China's sex ratio of newborns was 119.45 boys to 100 girls last year. In the past five years, family planning authorities had investigated more than 20,000 cases of illegal pregnancy gender scans and abortions.

Zeng Yi, a professor at the National School of Development at Peking University, was quoted by the *China Economic Times* in October as saying that if no measures are taken, there will be 30 million more men than women of marriageable age.

Cities pledge to reign in rogue chengguan

By Wang Yu

The severe beating of 76-year-old farmer Zhang Huiquan by an officer on the local urban management force, known as a chengguan, shocked the nation last week.

Zhang had been in Zhengzhou, Henan Province to sell sweet potatoes and raise money for his son's medication.

As of press time, the officer had already been arrested by police at the city government's order.

Rogue chengguan have been a perennial social issue for the public. Chengguan violence has been responsible for rising discontent with urban management bureaus nationwide.

But several local governments believe they can bring some order to the force.

The city government of Fuzhou, Fujian Province passed new regulations last week to prohibit chengguan from extorting protection money from street vendors. It also forbids chengguan to confiscate vendors' goods and beat them.

Zhangzhou, Fujian Province



The beating of a 76-year-old farmer (right) by chengguan shocked the nation last week. Photo provided by Beijing Times

has organized chengguan teams that consist of only female officers. Tu Pinghui, director of the Local Urban Management Bureau, said the female officers are more patient in communicating with street vendors; few illegal vendors are willing to fight with a female officer.

The Zhengzhou city govern-

ment also passed a series of 10 new regulations to stop violence and set up a system for investigating offending chengguan.

Most street vendors are unemployed workers from low-income families, said Li Jun, secretary of the municipal committee of the CPC in Guiyang, Guizhou Province. He said that the best solu-

tion is to create jobs. The Guizhou government passed a new regulation that allows vendors to temporarily sell on the roadside as long as they do not hold up traffic.

Except for waste disposal fees, stall owners will be allowed to operate free of charge for three years.

Gong Gaojian, a researcher in the Development Research Center of Fujian Provincial People's Government, said local government obsession with tidy streets has neglected the important role that street vendors play in the market.

In Beijing, a crossover between the police and chengguan has raised some suspicion. Li Runhua, vice-director of the Beijing Municipal Public Security Bureau, is also the director of the Beijing Municipal Bureau of City Administration and Law Enforcement.

Simply putting the police chief in charge of the chengguan is not a solution, said Peng Zhenhui, director of the China Government Academy of Peking University. In the hierarchy of the government, chengguan continue to exist in limbo.

Gov, Discovery Channel invest in documentaries

By He Jianwei

The State Council Information Office (SCIO) and Discovery Channel announced Tuesday China Imagica, a three-year co-production initiative to make epic documentaries about China.

Each will invest 50 percent to finish 20 documentaries in three years about places, people and things that inspire wonder.

Wang Zhongwei, deputy director of the SCIO, said the films will be broadcast in 180 countries and regions over Discovery Channel networks.

"With its amazing history and culture, the possibilities for documentary content in China are endless. Adding to China's many firsts in today's technological and engineering achievements, we will be producing our first 3D series as part of the China Imagica initiative," said Tom Keaveny, executive vice president and managing director, Discovery Networks Asia-Pacific.

The first two documentaries, *China's Man Made Marvels: Ancient Beijing* and *Rebuilding Sichuan*, will be filmed and premiere on Discovery Channel in the second quarter of 2011. The first takes a historical look at how the city of Beijing developed and the second chronicles the post-earthquake construction works in Sichuan Province.

A third program, *China*, one of Discovery's first to be produced in 3D, will debut on Discovery's 3D channel next year.

SCIO and Discovery Channel have been collaborating for six years. They have produced more than 20 hours of programming since 2004, including *Ultimate Olympic*, which highlights China's preparation for the 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing, and the *Man Made Marvels* China series, which features iconic structures such as the Great Wall, the ancient city of Xi'an and the Leshan Giant Buddha, as well as modern marvels.

"Too many stories about China are yet to be told. The initiative will include broader topics and discover deeper understanding about this country," Keaveny said. "Apart from the stories we will tell, we believe that China has immense untapped talent, and we are committed to investing in initiatives such as China Imagica to help develop this filmmaking talent."

Discovery will be providing the resources and support for experienced production.



Letter from Shanghai

The Shanghai World Expo ended on October 31. The five-month event gathered people, architecture and ideas from around the world for a unique moment of cultural exchange.

After the Expo period, our reporters will continue to touch on the big topics related to the world fair, find common cases and solutions and record their observations in this series titled "Letter from Shanghai."

Success of the Expo Families

By Zhang Dongya

During Shanghai Expo, a home-stay project called Expo Family allowed locals to receive foreign guests at home. Though it may have seemed a clone of Beijing's Olympics Family program from 2008, Shanghai was not trying to solve an accommodations problem – it hoped to give guests a glimpse into real Shanghaiese life.

A total of 187 households were selected for the Expo Family program. While only one third provided lodging, all aided tourists in sightseeing. Each family received at least one foreign visitor for three or four days.

Beijing Today visited some of these Shanghaiese families to learn what it was like hosting Expo visitors and learn about this overlooked cultural exchange program.



Expo families redecorate their homes to receive foreign guests.



(From the left) Wu Guoxiang, Cheng Shuchu and Liu Keying

Photo by Mockingbird

Focusing on cultural communication

Among the 60 Expo Families that offered lodging, 27 were in Zhabei District, a new area founded in 1988 in northern Shanghai. The first Expo Family Service Center was set up in the district's Linfen Community.

"Shanghai has more than 200 street communities. Linfen is a pretty ordinary one without high-rises or financial buildings. But Linfen specializes in community service. People living here are common salary workers, but their life ranks high on the happiness index," said Jin Tao, 27, director of the Expo Family Service Center.

In 2008, when Shanghai was busy preparing for the Expo, Linfen Community was selected as one of the two stops for the Expo-Themed Tour of the Yangtze River Delta. Organizers hoped to show the charm of Shanghaiese community life to visitors. The other area selected was the Huangpu River, a site of tremendous transition.

Expo Families were required

to provide food, housing and some kind of cultural specialty they could share with their guests. The standards were eventually applied citywide.

But safety came first. Wu Guoxiang, an Expo Family candidate in Zhabei District, replaced a water heater and installed gas alarms to make her home an Expo Family.

"I could have used the old water heater, which was still in good condition, but I wanted to make sure there wouldn't be any accidents," Wu said.

Selected families were sent to attend training courses in home safety, cooking and English conversation.

Gong Jinfeng, 63, learned a lot of English at the class in preparation for hosting a Canadian couple for four days of the Expo.

"Accommodations aren't the main point. We are trying to give them a chance to connect local Shanghaiese families and foreign visitors," Jin said.

Many of the guests asked questions about daily life, such as

the food they ate, as well as their host's income, housing costs and education history.

Small family's big effect

Liu Keying, 82, was the eldest person selected to be an Expo



One Expo family host Liu Keying has made hundreds of tiger-headed shoes for the Expo.

Family. She received dozens of visitors, including foreign governmental officials, foreign tourists and reporters.

On her busiest days, Liu received more than five groups of people. She has two notebooks full of visitors' signatures.

Liu has the rare ability to make tiger-headed shoes, a traditional handicraft designed for infants. During the Expo, Liu organized a handicraft team with other old women to make the special shoes. Each pair of shoes took three days to make. By the end of the Expo she and the team had finished 200 shoes to send visitors as gifts.

Four Singapore high school teachers lived with Liu's family and three other families, including Wu Guoxiang and Cheng Shuchu, for four days.

Wu, 59, is a Yueju (Shaoxing Opera) enthusiast. He performed the classical aria "The Dream of Red Mansions" for visitors. Cheng, a retired teacher and head of the Expo Village, completely redecorated his house to receive visitors.

The Singapore visitors arrived in Shanghai at midnight on the first day. The host families brought them, and in the following days tried to visit every

attraction with them and meet friends during the day. There were never enough hours in the day, and most days they were out on the town until 2 or 3 am.

They also took their guests to the vegetable market and community cultural center to learn about daily life and recreational activities.

"We were strangers on the first day, but grew close by the end," Wu said, "Every day they came home, they were talking about their experiences with us while they took off their shoes. They treated our home like their own."

"For them, it was totally different from living in a hotel. They got to see how real people lived. That is something that will stick with them better than any propaganda," she said.

One Singaporean, who had been to China in the 1980s, said he was surprised at the changes in the past 20 years. Others who had been to Shanghai several times learned more about Shanghaiese livelihood through their lodging experience.



Foreign visitors learned more about local culture and life with the Expo Families.

CFP Photos

Reporter's note

Continuing enthusiasm after the World Expo

By Zhang Dongya

The Yaohualu Station on subway Line 8, the nearest to the China Pavilion, is far less crowded than it was some weeks ago.

But above ground, there are still crowds of people trying to get a close look at the pavilions.

Two women from Hunan Province begged staff at the entrance to the Expo Park to allow them in.

"We bought the tickets but we couldn't come earlier because of personal problems," one woman said. "Please let us in for a while. We just want to have a quick look and take several pictures," she said.

Only park staff with proper paperwork are allowed in.

A female vendor selling candid photos was allowed in, but was limited to the entrance area.

It costs 10 yuan to take a picture by the China Pavilion. Some paid the vendor to snap a quick memory in front of the fence.

Some foreigners were seen walking around the Park and taking pictures.

One former Expo volunteer tried to enter with his volunteer license but was turned away. The volunteer, surnamed Qin, was a graduate student at Shanghai Normal University. He worked at the Expo throughout September to answer visitors' questions. This time he was trying to take a friend who missed the chance to visit.

"I answered the same questions every day. Stuff like, Where is the nearest toilet? But there were a funny moment. Once, a little boy asked me where the toilet was and I pointed to a small building. Then he asked, 'How many meters?' I told him to measure it himself," Qin said.

On Shanghai's streets, kiosks opened for the Expo are still functioning. Some volunteers are still nearby to answer questions. "This stand in the downtown is going to stay open," one middle-aged female volunteer said.

Thousands of Expo-customized taxis now carry passengers like common taxis in Shanghai. They are still decorated with Expo icons like the China Pavilion and Nanpu Bridge. Drivers said they had not received news about upcoming changes to their cars.

"It costs much to repaint the car. The way it looks now is at least memorable," one driver said.



People who missed the World Fair came to the Expo Park to take pictures at different countries' pavilions.

Photo by Mockingbird



Expo Families offered a window into local culture.

CFP Photos

On the last night in Wu's home, a Singaporean teacher suggested the Chinese government continue its Expo Family program to help people from other countries get a real picture of Chinese life.

"I think the Expo Family program helped bring ordinary families closer to three kinds of people: foreigners, officials and reporters. Local governors visited us several times, and hundreds of reporters talked about our work," she said.

Calls for cultural tourism

But the 60 families with lodging capabilities received far fewer guests than they had expected during the course of the program.

Expo Families in Zhabei District received one or two lodgers on average. Xuhui District fared better due to its cooperation with Ctrip, an online tour service.

"It was not the media's fault," said Cheng Shuchu, 65, head of Expo Village. "We received more than 100 reporters working for TV, radio and print media."

"I think the problem was rooted in economics," Cheng said.

Shanghai had more than enough hotels for Expo visitors, so many chose star-rated or economy establishments.

The application process was also complicated. Visitors interested in a home stay had to apply and be examined by the tourism bureau. Even if qualified, it could take a long time to make a reservation.

Since the Expo families were only allowed to receive group visitors, they also missed out on the chance to connect with

the many individual travelers.

The residential community was also required to prepare things for their visit, such as daily necessities.

Even though Expo Families operated as non-profits, fees charged by the travel agents and residential communities made home stays expensive.

"I think that cost turned away a lot of visitors," Cheng said.

The program also did little to promote awareness about the benefits of staying with an Expo Family or which cultural specialties the family offered.

"Expo families are not simply hotels ... They're involved more in the cultural experience, and actually the best place to learn how locals live," Cheng said.

"Singaporean teachers and French educators were familiar with what we were doing, so they went through the trouble to apply," he said. "That wasn't the case for most visitors. Besides, we were located far from the Expo Park so there was no reason to choose us for convenience."

Despite the few lodgers, Expo Families were considered one of the best places to gauge public opinions about current policies.

A group of 40 sociology students from the University of Melbourne came to ask Expo Families about the cost of living, housing prices, income and their ideas about environmental protection.

Though the home-stay program ended with the Expo, Ctrip said it planned to develop similar cultural tours in the future to meet tourist demand.



Thousands of Expo-customized taxis now carry passengers like common taxis in Shanghai.



Foreign visitors to the World Expo traveled in a traditional Shanghaiese rickshaw.

China takes action

Foreign real estate purchase halts amid rapid FDI growth

China has made a move amid increasing worries among emerging economies that much of the new US money will flood financial markets and the real estate industry. On Monday, the government announced new limits that restrict the ability of foreigners to buy residential or commercial property in the country.



The nation's property market has seen soaring investment from foreign investors.

Nan Shan/CFP Photo

New limits on foreign investment

The Ministry of Housing and Urban Rural Development announced Monday that purchases of housing by overseas organizations and individuals in the country would be capped or restricted, a move widely seen as combating speculative money from overseas that might flow into the property market.

The ministry has also joined with the State Administration of Foreign Exchange in issuing a circular calling for standardizing the management over purchases of housing by overseas organizations and individuals.

Under the new rules, foreigners would only be eligible to purchase one flat for their own use, and are required to provide proof of having worked in the country for at least one year prior to the purchase. Foreigners would

also need to provide a written statement proving they have no other homes in the country when making home purchases.

Also, individuals from Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan Province would need to provide documents proving they are working, studying or residing on the mainland when they make home purchases.

Regulations announced by the Chinese government in 2006 did not specify the number of home purchases allowed by overseas individuals.

Further, the new rules also require that foreign organizations in the country may only purchase non-residential housing in the cities of their registration to be used as offices, rather than as residential homes. This contrasts with previous regulations, which did not ban foreign institutions from buying residential homes for private use.

Overseas investors

The country's property market has seen soaring investment from foreign institutional investors this year, driven by strong expectations of yuan appreciation this year.

According to international real estate advisor CB Richard Ellis, the value of total property transactions in 15 Chinese cities has hit 49.9 billion yuan (\$7.36 billion) in the first half of this year, among which 19.4 billion yuan came from foreign institutional investors.

"Affected by the financial crisis, foreign investors were inactive last year and domestic investors dominated the market. But due to better liquidity and expectations of yuan appreciation, the situation is just the opposite this year," said Danny Ma, senior director of CB Richard Ellis Research China.

LaSalle Investment Management, a US-based real estate fund, for instance, has been actively

seeking opportunities in China, particularly in second-tier cities. Though the fund raised \$2 billion last year, it made no investments at all in 2009. But top management said they will definitely reach a deal in China this year.

"We are now in talks with several projects in the commercial and industrial sectors," said Eric Au, China director of LaSalle.

Eric Pang, head of Beijing Investment at Jones Lang LaSalle, said investments will be much more active in the second half.

"At the beginning of May, 12 commercial plots located in the core Central Business District area opened to public bidding, and a large number of reputable institutions and developers are expected to participate in the tendering process," Pang said. "To us, this therefore indicates a strong rebound in sentiment in the Beijing commercial investment market." (Agencies)

Analyst insight

Gov to curb hot money inflows disguised as FDI

China will restrict hot money inflows disguised as foreign direct investment, said Yao Jian, a spokesman for the Ministry of Commerce, on Tuesday.

The foreign exchange regulator has recently stepped up efforts to curb speculative money inflows fanned by loose monetary policy in the US.

The central bank governor on Tuesday also voiced concern at problems such as speculative fund inflows into the economy and rising inflation.

"The economic recovery in developed nations is slowing, resulting in continuously loose monetary conditions," Zhou

Xiaochuan said at a financial forum in Beijing. "Some emerging markets are facing certain pressure from capital inflows."

"China also faces some problems in its economy, such as the need to continue to boost residents' income and improve the structure of the economy, while all industries need to pay attention to rising price pressures," he said.

The benchmark Shanghai Composite Index closed down 3.98 percent at 2,894.54, its lowest closing level in about a month. Last Friday it plunged more than 5 percent following data showing that con-

sumer prices rose 4.4 percent in October.

Analysts said investors were selling off amid concerns about possible further monetary tightening, as Zhou's comments fuelled expectations of another interest rate hike.

"It could be Zhou's comments giving markets the jitters though we earlier expected the market to consolidate around the 2,900 level after the strong gains in recent weeks," said Zhang Gang, an analyst from Central China Securities.

China and other emerging economies worry that much of the new US money will flood their

financial markets and the real estate industry, as traders seek higher non-dollar returns.

Speculative "hot money" inflows are considered risky because they often flow out of an economy again on the first sign of weakness, exacerbating problems.

Excessive inflows of funds complicate the government's efforts to mop up the liquidity that is pushing up domestic asset prices.

China announced last month its first rate hike since 2007, which analysts said laid bare official fears over surging prices.

(Agencies)

Future of private equity lies in China

By Huang Daohen

The future of the private equity (PE) market is in China, said participants attending the 3rd Global PE Beijing Forum on November 14.

Sustainable economic growth, abundant investment opportunities and a positive government attitude would make China one of the most appealing countries in the world for global private equity investors, Ji Lin, vice mayor of the Beijing municipal government, said at the forum.

The country has about 20 percent of the world's total population and is currently among the three largest economies, with an annual growth between 8 to 10 percent. But Ji said there is still a relative lack of PE market here in China. In the US, private equity accounts for 3.4 percent of the GDP, while in China the figure is 0.2 percent.

"You can say there is enormous opportunity here," Ji said.

Sarah Alexander, chief executive officer of Emerging Markets Private Equity Association, agreed. She said China will be the trendsetter and probably the epicenter of private equity in the coming decade.

But Alexander said what makes the Chinese government so attractive to global private equity is no longer about capital. "China does not need foreign capital, as it has roughly \$2.4 trillion in foreign reserves," she said.

Instead, it is the management, expertise, technology and skill of global PE companies, she said.

Alexander said the environment and image for PE in China is better than probably anywhere in the world. In the US, PE managers are always barraged by taxes and labor concerns. "But PE professionals are like rock stars in China," she said.

People in China view private equity as a technique to add value, and they welcome it, she said.

Steve Howard, president of Global Foundation (Australia), also showed optimism for China's private equity as the country shifts its economy's focus from exports to the domestic consuming market.

Since the country produces more for domestic consumers, there will be more value-added products and more enterprises will need funding for the technology, Howard said. "And that's a very good opportunity for private equity."

Howard said China will also play a larger role in the private equity world as it increases the amount of capital invested overseas.

As a large number of China's sovereign wealth funds will be invested abroad, Chinese PE managers are going to have to set the rules for themselves, he said.

To represent or to be represented

Stir over anchor 'representing' Asia at G20

By Huang Daohen

Chinese anchor Rui Chenggang started a firestorm three years ago when he challenged the location of a Starbucks inside the Forbidden City. He claimed commercialism was destroying a historic landmark, and his arguments resulted in Starbucks pulling out.

Rui recently was the center of another controversy, when he took it upon himself to "represent Asia" by asking the US president a question at an important press conference.



CCTV anchor Rui Chenggang is known for asking witty and sharp questions.
Eric Piermont/IC Photo

If Ban Ki-moon represents the UN and Barack Obama represents the US, who represents Asia?

At a news conference for US president Obama after the G20 meetings in Seoul last Friday, Rui appointed himself the "representative" of Asia and seized the chance to ask Obama the last question.

Obama made a point to seek

a question from the Korean press. When the audience remained silent – "Anybody?" Obama asked – Rui raised his hand. Obama called on him, and Rui said, "I hate to disappoint you, President Obama, I'm actually Chinese. But I think I get to represent Asia ..."

Rui asked Obama how he would address the various interpretations of his policies.

The clip, which was less than a minute long, was posted on YouKu and went viral. It stirred a debate about Rui's words and behavior.

Rui later wrote in his blog, "There was not one Korean journalist who raised his or her hand. This was a rare scene for President Obama, and also quite embarrassing." "It was the first time that

the G20 was held in Asia. It would be a shame if there was not a single voice from the Asian media," he wrote.

According to an online poll conducted by news portal Tencent, about 90 percent of respondents supported Rui. Sina and NetEase conducted similar polls and found that Rui's support rate was 81 and 65 percent, respectively.

Expert view

A matter of misinterpretation over culture difference

While the Web lit up with praise and scorn for Rui Chenggang's "arrogance" in representing all of Asia before the US president, Christina Shen, professor from the College of Chinese Culture and Language at Beijing Normal University, considered the media splash the result of cultural differences between China and the West.

Shen said the incident was no big deal itself. "The US president is used to taking various questions from journalists on

any occasion, some of which were surely more exciting and interesting," she said.

For Rui's case, Obama might have called on the wrong Asian journalist who raised his hand, and the Chinese anchor, who self-appointed himself the representative of Asia, might have intended to use the controversial phrase to help him and the President out of an embarrassing moment.

"That is it, and case dismissed," Shen said.

But Shen said things can be different when culture differences are misinterpreted. To Westerners, Asians are generally timid, as reflected by their media corps.

Therefore, when a Chinese journalist stood out in the press conference, it created a sensation, Shen said.

The word "represent" also has different connotations in Chinese, Shen said. People use this word – *daibiao* – much more loosely in Chinese. The phrase is especially common

when speakers, usually leaders, deliver speeches.

It should actually be translated as "speak on behalf of."

Netizens, nevertheless, are unhappy about being "represented" when they perceive their opinions haven't been heard. So when Rui said he "represented" Asia, he immediately found himself in the middle of a brewing controversy.

Netizens were sensitive to the word "represent" and just overacted, Shen said.

Should we prevent naked wedding photographing?

By Zhao Hongyi

The Shanghai Wedding Service Association recently appealed for wedding photography providers to stop their nude photo service, the Shanghai Daily reported.

The association urged the local government to take measures to forbid service providers from listing the nude photography service and to punish those who disobey by withdrawing their business license.

The Chinese pay great attention to their weddings. Months before, the couple will usually go to a photography agency to take photos wearing fancy suits and costumes.

Naked wedding photography is becoming popular among the younger generation – to the chagrin of many traditionalists.

Recently, when a young couple booked a session of naked photography, it broke up the wedding. The bride was the one who suggested the idea, and when the groom's mother found out, she said their family would no longer allow the marriage.

"We are not in support of the crazy idea," said He Lina, vice president of the association, "as the wedding should be sacred." She calls on the young generation to respect traditions and morality.

But legal advisors insist that naked photography is legal. Instead, those who distribute the photos online or in public should be the ones who get prosecuted.

Comment

Young generation's passion

We, the young generation, should have the freedom to express ourselves. Naked photography shouldn't be condemned as long as the couples aren't coerced into doing it. Today, working and living pressures are high. It's not easy to find an outlet for these pressures. Why is it so difficult to let us do what we want?

– Xiao Jing, a college student

Traditional morality

I agree that young people should have more freedom, but that does not mean they can do whatever they want. It's quite easy for them to do something stupid. And after years or decades, they will feel embarrassed and ashamed for the ridiculous things they did. We need freedom and liberation, but not in that manner. Believe me!

– Xie Changhua, a mother of three kids

Wrong target

The association appealed to the wrong people. It's not the photography agencies that should be condemned. Instead, it's the young generation, whose morality and principles are all wrong.

– Wang Jun, professor, Beijing University

Privacy concern

I agree with professor Wang's judgment. We should do the right things, say the right words and behave properly in public if we expect a clean society. But that doesn't mean we cannot do something beyond the boundaries of morality. You have the right to do that in private.

– Mikko Sulaninn, Finnish student in Beijing

Comment

Good for the anchor

It is important that President Obama should answer questions from reporters from all over the world. I am not sure why he took most of the questions from Western journalists during the press conference and left only one to the South Korean press, but good on the anchor for standing up and asking his question. This man had no choice but to identify himself. I do not think that the journalist is such an egoist that he believes he represents all of Asia. The title was for expediency of the moment. At times, one must be

brave and inventive.

– George, freelancer, Canada

Wise question or not?

I care more about what he really asked. That is the job of a journalist. If he could have asked something wiser, maybe his behavior would be more justifiable.

– Roberto Chen, editor

Another show-off

The anchor is just trying to show off. I've seen one of Rui's past interviews in English with Christian Murck, president of the American Chamber of Commerce. In that interview, Murck tries to impress his Chinese audi-

ence by asking for the interview to be conducted in Chinese. Rui reluctantly agreed, and I felt that at the given time, the reluctance arose because Rui wanted to showcase his English. Nevertheless, we have to give him credit for doing his job and doing it well.

– Hu Xin, manager's assistant

Mercy

Spare some mercy to the anchor. There were no takers, and Rui didn't jump the queue. Besides, imagine the situation facing Rui: in front of a live worldwide TV broadcast, facing the US president, thinking on

his feet and speaking in a non-native language.

– Lillian, secretary

A favor to Asia

Asians are too shy and timid. To some extent, most Asians sort of look up to Westerners. To me, though Rui did not have the right to represent the whole continent, he did Asia a favor by asking the US president a question. While the media world is dominated by Western journalist, there should be at least one lonely and brave Asian counterpart.

– Mark Johnson, PR consultant, US

The secret world of ayi

A look into the highly unregulated housekeeping industry

By Liang Meilan

Large numbers of Filipino women are in the country illegally as housekeepers. They have caused a stir about the oversight of the domestic housekeeping industry.

Many problems have been reported by families who employ unskilled and irresponsible ayi. Some cases are even appalling.

Yet the phenomenon of cheap housekeepers extends deeper. There is a hidden national black market, one involving around 310,000 ayi in Beijing.



Filipino teacher Anabelle Jesus is teaching ayi how to iron according to different fabrics.

Difficult situation for ayi

Last month, when discussion about illegal Filipino housekeepers was at its crest, a former Filipino housekeeper, 41-year-old Anabelle Jesus, spoke out about the housekeeping industry.

She was employed as deputy manager at Verymaids housekeeping company and was in charge of ayi training.

Ayi are graded on a 100-point scale. "I only give scores of 40 to Chinese housekeepers and nurses because of their poor skills," Jesus said, adding that almost all her students have no idea how to iron clothes.

Another thing Jesus realized is that ayi's attitudes are another major cause of dissatisfaction among employers.

In the Philippines, people don't look down upon domestic service workers. "So I don't have the feeling of being inferior to people who have vocations with higher salaries. I see myself as an indispensable helper for clients, even the society," De Jesus said. "Whenever my work is recognized and praised by others, I feel like I am a hero."

But in China, she finds that though a handful of ayi are passionate about their work, they still have problems overcoming the perception that they are doing a menial job.

Zhang Fengling, a 39-year-old ayi who has been doing the job for seven years in Beijing, said that she has yet to muster the courage to tell her husband and son back home in Heilongjiang Province what it is she does.

"I keep telling them I am working in a factory and send money back each month," she said. "I lie not because I don't like my job. It is just a white lie for people who don't really understand the great contribu-

tion we make for families and for society."

Sometimes, when ayi are asked to take care of the elderly and the pregnant, they can be overwhelmed. Such tasks require professional knowledge, but no one seems to be willing to pay for any sort of ayi training program.

Zhang recalled that in her early years in this industry, she often felt stranded because her employment agency would do nothing to help her improve her skills.

"I could only learn very limited things from colleagues and even from the clients, which is really a terrible thing because it easily causes unstable work relations with employers," she said, adding that most of her offers in the first year lasted less than a month.

Unhealthy labor relations

Housekeeping training centers do exist though — most are run by government institutions, teaching the most basic skills. "But we need to pay for the training from our own pockets," Zhang said.

"Several thousand yuan in tuition is too much for many of us," she said. "So most of us don't choose to be educated, instead risking the danger of being fired by the boss. We know if this company doesn't want us, we can still go to another, maybe smaller company with lower standards."

Yin Jianfeng, CEO of Verymaids, has done extensive research on the domestic housekeeping industry.

"Almost all these housekeeping companies are not companies in the true sense," he said. "They can only be called matchmaking agencies for the introduction of ayi to potential clients."

In Beijing, 95 percent of registered housekeeping companies



Cooking class



Military training for ayi

Photos provided by Verymaids

have less than 50,000 yuan in capital, which is only enough for setting up an information office. "So ayi in fact are not staff members of the company. They are only 'information' sold by the company," Yin said.

Yin said this industry will remain in chaos without effective regulations or laws to restrict it. The workers don't get insurance and by and large have no social welfare. "They are isolated from any protection that labor laws might provide, even though they are an indispensable part of our fast-moving society," Yin said.

What's more, ayi are paid directly by the hour or the month from the clients they serve. Tax evasion is ubiquitous.

neer providing a potential means for regulating the industry.

A 37-year-old self-described professional manager, Yin was formerly a senior publisher and studied for an MBA for a year in Switzerland. He has fired 17 ayi in the past, and with each one he lets go, he feels the need for helping this unprotected group of workers.

"We are so lucky to have financial support from a high-profile venture capital company," he said.

Since March, Verymaids' has given its employees four forms of insurance and a housing subsidy.

There are currently 200 ayi who work for the company. They are paid directly by the company, which means they can get a basic salary even if they have no client. "They are no longer products, but valued urban workers," Yin said.

To achieve sustainability, the company must be profitable. The secret, Yin said, is to run it like any other company and continually polish the service.

The focus of Verymaids is now to improve its ayi's skills by offering courses given by experts in fields ranging from nursery to infant psychology.

Knowing well the mentality of ayi and the social discrimination they potentially face, the company also designs activities and lectures to strengthen ayi's sense of belonging and enhance their understanding of the importance of the industry.

Charity activities are held weekly in an orphanage. "This not only provides ayi a good chance to practice their skills, but also conveys the significance of caring for the disadvantaged, which is greatly ignored in this society."

Looking into the future, Yin is confident that his innovative model can make a big difference in the industry. "Yet flaws in policies and laws still exist, which create big barriers for the industry's development," he said.

Ayi as staff member — a possible solution

To improve the fledgling industry, the priority is to change the labor relationship, which means accepting ayi as real members of a company.

"When ayi feel like they belong to a company, their role shifts," Yin said, emphasizing the model of modern enterprise should be introduced to the industry.

Yet there are too many housekeeping companies, making it a challenge to get them to enact reforms. There is also a shortage of capital and capable leaders.

Verymaids, collaboratively founded by Yin and some of his friends, can be regarded as a pio-

WWF report says China's growth still unsustainable

By Han Manman

Rapid industrialization, urban development and intensive farming have set off the alarms on China's environmental sustainability, and the implications are global, according to a report published Monday by World Wildlife Fund (WWF) China.

The report, "China Ecological Footprint 2010," said the country is at a crossroads in its sustainable development as its increasing demand for resources has outpaced what its ecological system can provide, with consumption now 1.2 times over the limit.

The ecological footprint measures whether a country, region or world is living within its ecological means. The newly issued report aims to explore the country's challenges and opportunities in an increasingly resource-constrained world.

Li Ling of WWF China said that over the past three decades, China's per capita income has grown by more than 50 times as a result of economic development. However, rapid industrialization, urban development and intensive agriculture have increased the pressure on nature.

She said if the entire world consumed the same amount of resources as China did in 2007, it would require the equivalent of 1.2 planets. That is up from 0.8 in 2003.



Rapid industrialization is severely affecting the country's environmental sustainability. CFP Photo

"This shows that the rate of growth is extremely fast and that if development goes on like this, it is not sustainable," she said.

The report said changes in individual consumption patterns and the shift from a rural to urban lifestyle have overtaken population to become the principal driver in the growth of China's total ecological footprint.

The report also said that Beijing ranks first in China for demand of resources and

second in terms of how far its biological capacity falls short of sustaining that need – referred to as ecological deficit – behind only Shanghai.

"Raising awareness of China's footprint is a crucial step in China's efforts to improve the well-being of its people without jeopardizing their future," said Jim Leape, WWF international director general. "This report tells us that to achieve its goal of a 'harmonious society,' China must find

ways to grow its economy while protecting the natural systems upon which the economy, and society, depend."

"Today China's global influence is greater than at any time in recent history, and by reducing pressure on natural resources through better management and increased efficiency, the country can play an important role in sustaining the global environment while gaining competitiveness," Leape said.

US exports of high-tech products may ease trade imbalance

By Zhao Hongyi

A list released earlier this week by the American Chamber of Commerce in Shanghai revealed that the US ranks 12th among the biggest exporters to China, trailing countries like Japan, South Korea, Malaysia and Australia.

"We were shocked and realized immediately that the appreciation of the yuan cannot solve the imbalance in US-China trade," Brenda Lei Foster, chamber president, said at the release ceremony. "We should raise our own exporting competitiveness."

"The EU and Japan are rivals in exporting to China, because they are much more competitive than the US, especially in high technology," said Liu Jianhua, professor from China's Zhongnan University of Economics and Law.

The professor said the US has no monopoly in high-technology exports. The EU and Japan have exported many high-tech products that the US is protecting.

"The critical point is to raise your export competitiveness instead of trade quarrels," Liu said. A 1 percent increase of exports to China equals \$123 billion and 76,000 jobs, according to the chamber's estimate.

Foster said the US has picked the wrong fights. "But it's hard for us to gain that 1 percent," she said. "What we've gotten from our quarrels is the huge trade deficit."

"China is stronger in labor-intensive industries and products," Liu said. "Therefore, it's difficult for the US to balance bilateral trade only by increasing its industrial product sale to China."

In the 1960s and '70s, the US lost its industrial advantage to Japan. It moved its manufacturing bases to developing countries and focused on research and development in the financial and high-tech industries.

The US has been quite conservative about exporting high-tech products and secrets. Financial innovations and derivatives broke up when the global financial crisis hit, which hurt the economy.

"The final solution is that you need to provide the products your customers want," Liu said. Currently, high-tech products are needed in China, and exporting such could be an effective solution to economic recovery in the US, he said.

UK hopes to attract more Chinese tourists

By Li Zhixin

Twenty-three British travel organizations, including regional tourism authorities, local travel agencies, hotels and department stores, headed by the British Tourist Authority (BTA), came to China this week to try to lure more Chinese tourists to the UK.

The delegation held business negotiations with more than 40 Chinese travel agencies in Beijing on Tuesday, then attended the China International Travel Mart in Shanghai from Thursday to Sunday.

The BTA said it hopes to strengthen communication and cooperation with Chinese counterparts and promote UK tourism

in the Chinese market.

"Chinese tourists' consumption in the UK amounted to 1.23 billion yuan in 2009. China has become the most important emerging tourism market for the UK," said Christopher Rodrigues, chairman of BTA. "In the next four years, the growth rate of Chinese tourists to Britain is expected to reach 90 percent."

He said such growth can be attributed to China's sustained and stable economic growth, consumers' increasing confidence and spending power and exchange rate.

Although British tourism was influenced by an Icelandic volcano eruption in April, tourists

from China in the UK still hit an all-time high this year. As of October, the number of visas issued to Chinese tourists increased 80 percent over the same period last year, while business visas increased 23 percent.

"In the short term, business travel still dominates Chinese travel to Britain, but with the growth of the Chinese middle class and its soaring demand for traveling abroad, recreational travel will increase rapidly," Rodrigues said.

Rodrigues said the BTA has been pushing to simplify the visa application process for Chinese citizens in order to attract more tourists. Free travel to Britain is expected to

open to Chinese people in the next one or two years.

In order to boost public interest in Britain, the BTA plans to launch a promotion next month along with the British embassy, and to collect casual Chinese visitors and students' travel stories and personal feelings about Britain in the form of photos, videos or words.

During its one-week visit in China, the BTA also launched an online travel specialist training service – Britagent – to give those in the Chinese tourism industry a better understanding of British sightseeing resources and to promote tourism products.

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Vibrant speakers with innovative ideas foster cross-cultural understanding

By Liang Meilan

The second TEDxBeijing took place last Saturday, highlighted by talks about spreading innovative ideas in the real world as well as online.

The event, held at the Star Theater, was attended by about 250 people, and was broadcast live to 600 people at StudioX, Tsinghua University and Communication University of China. A live stream broadcast on Tudou gathered another 15,000 viewers.

As the offspring of the popular and innovative TED (Technology Entertainment and Design) talks, last week's event was themed "uncovering innovation" and included a diverse lineup of 12 speakers, including Lü Zhi, one of the most respected panda experts; Xie Guangming, a doctor in Beijing University who designed the robot fish; and Sam Flemming, expert of the Chinese netizen community.

"The whole idea is about finding and understanding how ideas are made in China through disseminating speeches that are no longer than 18 minutes long, which is a strict replica of the official TED talks," said Samantha Wright, managing director of the event.

Half the speakers were from China and half were from abroad. "Because TED is a Western concept that has just been introduced to China, not many locals know about it," Wright said. "So we have to expand its impact first in the expat community. We are happy to see that many local innovators showed great interest in speaking at the event."



Lü Zhi, who works in panda preservation and environmental conservation, talks about building a sustainable environment. Photo provided by TED X Beijing

Lü Zhi, known as the "panda mother," was one of those local speakers. With years of panda preservation and environmental conservation experience, Lü said that building a sustainable environment depended on people's values and a long-term win-win model.

She put forth the view that the environment is a public interest that also can generate opportunities for private profit.

She illustrated the idea using the example of greening barren mountains. "Various profits can be made from this one action. Traditionally, new green areas

can be developed into mushroom farms. Now, as the concept of the carbon sink is stressed, the new green areas become ideal places for people to buy the carbon sink," she said.

Wen Fang, a local multidisciplinary artist, co-produced artwork with rural women from Ningxia Province.

James Flanagan, another organizer, said he wanted these talks to be an annual conference, with small-scale events that happen throughout the year. "There is definitely room for improvement," he said. "We want to bring as diverse an audience

as possible to the events to present as many different viewpoints as possible."

TED conferences have been held in many countries, but they have yet to come to China. Flanagan said he had high hopes for a TED China event.

"Many more people in China will understand the concept behind the TED events," he said. "We really think that such an event will allow people outside China to get access to the people and ideas that matter in China, and really increase understanding between China and the rest of the world."

Making science cool and accessible

By Annie Wei

Once upon a time, science was considered boring and geeky. But the popularity of shows like *The Big Bang Theory* have redefined what "geeky" means – it's now almost cool to be a geek.

In Beijing, several groups are trying to make science mainstream through a series of interesting events. One of them is Kexue Communications, founded and managed by Australians Ben Bravery, 28, and Tim O'Mahony, 26.

Both Bravery and O'Mahony majored in science in college. Bravery has worked in Beijing the last four years as the managing editor of a peer-reviewed journal for the Chinese Academy of Sciences. O'Mahony moved to China six months ago, and before that worked for a small Filipino non-profit organization.

The two started their friendship while in college, when they traveled to different schools to teach science.

Science is important because it affects everyone, O'Mahony said, yet many people are intimidated by it, or apathetic toward



Ben Bravery, 28, from Australia, does a science show in a local school. Photo provided by Kexue Communications

it. There, O'Mahony sees his job as a "knowledge broker" to make science accessible to everyone.

They combine dramatic techniques in their science teaching, resulting in entertaining and informative presentations. They also use

characters, accents and humor, and encourage students to have a positive attitude.

In September, Bravery and O'Mahony traveled to Shanghai to present science shows in local schools. They were representing Qwestacon, an Aus-

tralian science center, and working with the Shanghai Science and Technology Museum.

O'Mahony said they visited a school for children of migrant workers. "The experience was a real eye-opener for me. The students were eager to volunteer and answer questions. It was also inspirational to see how dedicated the teachers were in a challenging situation," he said.

The school had very basic facilities, with no air-conditioning or fans, even during the heat of summer. Every year, a quarter of the school's students will leave the school.

O'Mahony said that the teachers and students faced many challenges every day, yet the students were enthusiastic, polite, smart and engaging. They performed two science shows for them, one about the science of music and the other about the science of electricity.

Currently, the two expats are doing their shows for international or bilingual schools. "But what we want is to get involved with more Chinese schools," O'Mahony said.

Event

iWeekend comes to town

iWeekend, a non-profit organization in Spain, will offer a business course for Web savvy people with the entrepreneurial spirit this weekend. This provides a great way to meet like-minded people and exchange ideas over two full days. As the organization's mission statement says, it is ideal for entrepreneurs who are looking for a team and for professionals looking for a project or to network and take on a challenge.

Where: Orange Labs, Raycom Infotech Park C – South Tower, 10/F, 2 Kexueyuan Nan Lu, Haidian District

When: November 19-21, 10 am – 10:30 pm

Email: beijing@iweekend.org

Cost: 200 yuan

A big pile of junk: Art through trash

To raise awareness of environmental protection, old works of art will be converted into new works in this workshop. The idea came to artist Devin Allen as he was experimenting in an abandoned classroom where artworks were reused as books, collages and other items. By practicing this in person, people can express themselves visually and at the same time send a message to society. The event will be conducted in English with Chinese translation.

Where: La Suite in Ullens Center of Contemporary Art (UCCA), 4 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District

When: November 20, 1:30-3 pm

Tel: 6466 2250

Cost: Free

Free make-up trial

Every Friday afternoon, a maximum of five women get together at Beijing Institute of Fashion Technology to have a free make-up session for the coming night. Professional makeup artists put on high-quality cosmetics and give advice. Those who want to participate, please book a seat before each Thursday afternoon.

Where: Beijing Institute of Fashion Technology, Room 304, The Continuing Education School Building, A2, Dongyinghua Jie, Chaoyang District

When: Every Friday, 1-5 pm

Tel: 8110 7907

Cost: Free

Dance and Theater Improvisation Day

Two independent dance and theater groups, Beijing Improv and LDTX, will hold Dance and Theater Improvisation Day, consisting of workshops and performances. Participants will have the chance to acquire the skills of improv under the guidance of senior instructors. After that, people will enjoy a performance by the two groups using the ideas developed in the workshop.

Where: LDTX studios, Xiadianchangpo Village, Xidawang Lu, Chaoyang District

When: November 20, 3-9 pm

Tel: 6405 4842

Cost: 100 yuan, 60 yuan for students

(By Liang Meilan)

Say hello to Santa Claus

By Zhao Hongyi

Christmas is coming, and what better way to prepare than by sending a greeting to Santa Claus in his hometown.

Rovaniemi, located near the Arctic Circle in northern Finland, is regarded as Father Christmas' hometown. The China Post International office at the northeast corner of Jianguomen has prepared dozens of cards for people interested in sending their tidings to Finland. People can also arrange for St. Nick to reply – you know, to keep the kids happy.

The post office has provided this service for years. In the past, individuals had to enclose stamps in their letters if they wanted a reply. They sometimes would wait for a long time before receiving something.

This year, the office has opened a special



The post office at Jianguomen provides a Santa greeting card service.

CFP Photo

"Christmas post office," where individuals just write down their greet-

ings and the post office will do the rest.

For a flat rate – prices

of greeting cards range from 10 to 40 yuan – the post office will make sure

your card gets into the right hands and that a stamped reply goes to the address you provide.

Santa will include in his package two special stamps, a Christmas stamp folder and a 3D postcard.

The Jianguomen office also has limited edition stamps available until December 31. One is of Santa Claus, the other a sugar stick with a butterfly tie.

Lü Shitong, the office manager, said they will deliver the cards together to Santa Claus. You will be able to receive a reply if you send your card before December 10. If you miss that deadline, the earliest you can expect a reply is January 31, 2011.

Where: East side of Jianguomen Bei Dajie, Dongcheng District, Beijing

Contact: Lü Shitong
Tel: 6512 8114

ASK Beijing Today

Email your questions to: weiyang@ynet.com

Hello, I am new in Beijing and I am allergic to gluten. It's really difficult to find gluten-free food here. I wonder if you know a bakery that sells gluten-free bread?

You can try the deli store at Kempinski Hotel (50 Liangmaqiao Lu, Chaoyang District; tel: 6465 3388), which makes gluten-free bread. A loaf of plain bread costs 38 yuan. You can buy a week's supply and keep them in the fridge. However, all gluten-free bread and pastry have to be pre-ordered.

Do you know how I can get a water filtration system installed in my house so that tap water becomes safe to drink?

There are many products available at appliance malls like Gome and Suning. Sundian (19 Sanlitun Lu, Chaoyang District; tel: 6415 2411) has quite a few brands. Its tap water filters start at 1,900 yuan, with cartridges that need changing every six months; for bathrooms, the filter is more expensive, more than 3,000 yuan. The mall will arrange for workers to install the system for you.

Hey, I read your story about animal adoption last week. I contacted the Pet Orphans Home but they told me they did not organize the mobile adoption, but that I am welcome to visit. However, their orphanage is too far away. How can I join the next mobile adoption?

The Mobile Adoption event was not organized by Pet Orphans Home – sorry for the confusion. It was organized by Chris Barden and an online group that helps homeless animals. You can find more information at blog.sina.com.cn/xiaofanzhuoer. (By Wei Ying)

Paying bills is about to get more convenient

By Li Zhixin

China Union Pay and Lakala, a Lenovo holding electronic payment company, will establish 3,000 pay points throughout the city where people can pay their utilities and other household bills.

By swiping a card through a mini imprinter called Lakala, citizens can pay their water, electricity, gas and Internet bills, add money to their cell phones, apply for a loan and even donate to charity. The pay points will be located in supermarkets or convenience stores.

The locations of all the pay points are on lakala.com.

Residents can also install a mini payment terminal (399 yuan) in the home. The company said their system will not charge any transaction fees.

Chen Jing, the vice president of Lakala, predicted that more than 20,000 families will install the device by the end of the year.

Up to now, Union Pay and Lakala have developed 40,000 pay points covering more than 200 cities.



Mini payment terminal available for 399 yuan

CFP Photo

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The Living Room of the Nation

By He Jianwei

Nordic documentary filmmakers have earned a fine reputation for taking a critical look at a wide range of subjects.

Since 2006, the top award-winning documentaries from the Nordic Documentary Film Festival (NORDOX) have been screened in Beijing every year.

Starting November 13, the Ullens Center for Contemporary Art will host screenings of 17 films from the fifth NORDOX. The pieces take viewers on a world tour to explore cross-Nordic, international and cross-cultural social and political themes.



Videocracy



Harvesting the Wasteland

Telling the

Social investigation b



"This year's [selection] focuses on the phenomenon of media power and the relationship between media and politics," said Henri Seng, curator of this year's NORDOX.

The opening film is *Videocracy*, a Swedish documentary that explores TV magnate and Italian President Silvio Berlusconi's influence on commercial television. Director Erik Gandini takes a first-person approach to the film.

It opens with black-and-white footage of a popular late-night cable quiz show Berlusconi produced in the 1970s, in which the studio was decorated like a bar and the masked housewives stripped when call-in contestants answered a soft-ball question correctly.

In the three decades since, Berlusconi has created a perfect system of TV-entertainment and politics. His TV channels, known for their overexposure of nearly-naked women, are seen by many as a mirror of his own tastes.

Many of Italy's young women aspire to be a Velina, one of the silent showgirls who provide eye candy on entertainment programs.

"Today 80 percent of Italians use television as their primary source of information. Television is a marketing channel for sending a message to the masses; that message is have fun and forget reality for a bit," Gandini said. "The most important thing is to be noticed and seen; stardom, money and admiration follow automatically."

Gandini gets rare access to the president's summer resort in Sardinia. He talks with four people, including Lele Mora, Italy's number one media mogul and a close friend of Berlusconi, who lives in a luxurious villa surrounded by the young celebrities he has cultivated; Fabio, producer of the Italian version of *Big Brother*; Fabrizio Corona, a rogue paparazzi and huge celebrity himself; and Ricky, a factory worker obsessed with presenting himself on television as a mash-up of Jean-Claude Van Damme and Ricky Martin.

Gandini lives in Sweden, but was born and grew up in Italy. Berlusconi's commercial television was an important experience for his generation.

In the late 1980s, he moved from Bergamo to Sweden, where the TV climate was totally different from Italy. "I still remember my astonishment when I realized that the Swedish national public broadcasting service showed no advertisements, few scantily clad women dancers and undubbed foreign films," he said.

"For Italians, television no longer refers to an actual TV box. It has become a powerful and mystical entity with scary unknown powers that has penetrated life, dreams and, of course, politics."

— Erik Gandini, director of *Videocracy*

Sweden was where he discovered creative documentary. "I soon fell in love with it and how Sweden treated it as a highly-respected cinematic art form," he said.

He has gradually realized the increasing power and unique role of television in Italy. "For Italians, television no longer refers to an actual TV box. It has become a powerful and mystical entity with scary unknown powers that has penetrated life, dreams and, of course, politics," he said.

His film was conceived as a way to expose the media monster for what it is.

In producing the film, he found a tension not only between Berlusconi supporters and their opponents, but between TV elites and ordinary viewers.

"In choosing documentary film as a medium for examining this topic, Gandini risked both personal and legal repercussions," Seng said.

The Swedish director Fredrik Gertten also faced pressure in making his documentary *Bananas!* *

The film depicts how Juan Dominguez, a Los Angeles personal injury lawyer,

launches a lawsuit in the US on behalf of 12 Nicaraguan banana plantation workers made sterile by exposure to a long-banned pesticide.

The defendant is Dole Food, the world's largest producer and marketer of fresh fruits and vegetables.

The director takes the viewers from Nicaragua, where Dominguez selects his plaintiffs, to an LA courtroom, where Dole president David Delorenzo stands trial. The fruit mogul's expensive legal team proceeds to tear apart Dominguez's case.

In a case of life imitating art, the director and producer were soon sued by Dole Food.

Gertten's film is arriving in Beijing late. While it was an award winner at last year's NORDOX, the organizers of the festival were forced to remove it from the list due to the lawsuit by Dole Food. The company accused the director of portraying false information and called for a halt of all screenings.

"The director held his ground. Because of the enormous support the film received, even in the Swedish parliament, Dole decided to drop its lawsuit," Seng said.

From Friday through next Thursday, NORDOX 2010 will air the rest of its documentaries. Topics include the silent life of Norway's northern farms, Europe's biggest brothel in Cologne, Germany, the living rooms of six Finns and an abortion clinic in St. Petersburg, Russia.



Dreams in C



Human

the truth

by Nordic filmmakers



Control



Copenhagen



Bananas! * Photos provided by UCCA



Killing Girls

Upcoming programs of NORDOX 2010

Friday, November 19

Human (2009) and The Good Capitalists (2009)

The first Norwegian film asks the existential question of how we evaluate others as human beings. The second is about Norway's state pension fund, the world's fastest growing fortune with the equivalent of 2 trillion yuan invested in more than 7,000 multinational companies. Hired by the National Bank, Henrik Syse's task is to persuade multinational companies into behaving better. If the companies do not listen to him, the Council on Ethics investigates the companies and kicks them out of its portfolio.

When: 4 pm

The Living Room of the Nation (2009)

This Finnish film is an intimate look at ordinary Finnish pathos through private living rooms.

When: 5:30 pm

Control (2009) and Like a Pascha (2010)

The first film is a Norwegian one about emotions we prefer to keep hidden. The second, a Swedish presentation, explores the biggest brothel in Europe, a blue 11-story building in Cologne, Germany where 200 women serve 700 Johns per day.

When: 7 pm

Saturday, November 20

Mister Governor (2008)

This Swedish film follows the former Swedish Minister of Defense, Anders Björck, in his work as governor of Uppsala County.

When: 4 pm

Everything is Relative (2008)

This Danish film portrays how our reactions to challenges are relative to the conditions that guide our individual lives.

When: 5:30 pm

Videocracy (2009)

This Swedish film tells how the TV magnate and president of Italy influences commercial television.

When: 7 pm

Sunday, November 21

Dreams in Copenhagen (2009)

This Danish film discusses the relationship between humans and their physical surroundings.

When: 4 pm

Martin – The Ghost (2009) and The Chinese are Coming (2010)

Ghost is a Norwegian film about Martin Hasle, a man crippled by a car wreck nine years ago. Hasle's brain was severely damaged, leaving him unable to move or speak. He continues to communicate using a computer he controls with his left thumb. The second film is a Swedish piece about a Chinese entrepreneur who invests billions of dollars in the Swedish city Kalmar.

When: 5:30 pm

A Mother's Courage (2009)

This Icelandic film is about a mother's desperate quest to understand her autistic son.

When: 7 pm

Tuesday, November 23

Dreams in Copenhagen (2009)

When: 4 pm

Control (2009) and The Good Capitalists (2009)

When: 5:30 pm

A Mother's Courage (2009)

When: 7 pm

Wednesday, November 24

Everything is Relative (2008)

When: 4 pm

Like a Pascha (2010) and Human (2009)

When: 5:30 pm

Steam of Life (2010)

This Finnish film portrays men in Finland's saunas sharing touching stories about love, death, birth and friendship.

When: 7 pm

Thursday, November 25

Harvesting the Wasteland (2008) and The Chinese are Coming (2010)

The first is a Norwegian film about three generations of a family living under the same roof in a small mountain village.

When: 4 pm

Mister Governor (2008)

When: 7 pm

Where: Ullens Center for Contemporary Art (UCCA), 798 Art District, 4 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District

Admission: 15 yuan per session, 10 yuan for students, UCCA members watch free
Tel: 8459 9269

Urban fiction

Debut works by new British writers



From left to right: Ross Raisin, Catherine O'Flynn and Raphael Selbourne

Photos provided by British Council

By He Jianwei

A novelist's first book is usually seen as a fictive biography, and rightly so. For most beginning writers, it is easier to tackle the familiar.

Invited by the Cultural and Education Section of the British Embassy, three promising new British writers whose first novels won British literature awards met to discuss the modern British literary scene with Beijing readers last Sunday at One Way Street Bookstore.

Their stories observe the issues facing urban life, including multiculturalism, two-faced cities and the growing gap between rich and poor.

Native and immigrant

Raphael Selbourne, winner of the 2009 Costa First Novel Award, tells the story of an Asian woman's life in Britain in his first novel, *Beauty*.

Beauty is the name of a 20-year-old Bangladeshi Muslim living in Wolverhampton, a fairly typical ex-industrial hovel.

The young woman is caught in a difficult situation.

Having spent much of her childhood in England without being allowed to go to school, she was sent home to Bangladesh at the age of 14 to marry her cousin, a 45-year-old Mullah. Despite family pressure, she was able to keep the man out of her bedroom.

Beauty feigns madness to get a single ticket back to England. But the pressure from her family never lets up, and she is forced to sign papers to bring her husband through immigration.

Now alone and on the streets, survival is hard and her illiteracy has closed many doors. She sees a world composed of what she believes to be dirty, violent whites, sex-offending blacks and other Muslims.

Her voyage of discovery forces her to examine her own beliefs and think seriously about her future. When her brothers search for her in the city, the conflict between her desire for personal freedom and her sense of family duty deepens.

"I hope it shows us the way a young Muslim woman sees British multicultural society," Selbourne said. "I also hope the book makes the reader ask questions about exactly what *Beauty* is considering – the nature of freedom and duty and cultural differences among us."

Selbourne's inspiration comes from his own experience. Born in Oxford, Sel-

bourne studied politics at Sussex University before moving to Italy as a translator.

When he came back to England, he settled down in the West Midlands. He applied for a job in a secondary school in Wolverhampton to teach math and reading to the unemployed.

Before he saw multiculturalism first hand, Selbourne had been a big believer of the propaganda he read in the UK. He told his Italian friends that it was not a racist country. "Most of my time was spent in Oxford and Cornwall, so I didn't have much experience with real multiculturalism," he said.

Working in Wolverhampton was another story.

He felt acutely the outsider and saw that, in reality, people do little mixing. "Part of celebrating diversity should be celebrating what we have in common," he said.

He emphasized the importance of literature to a society. "A novel is an observation and investigation into human nature. It is like a mirror that reflects both the blue skies above our head and the path beneath our feet," he said.

Prosperous and desolate

Although Catherine O'Flynn won the Costa First Novel Award a year before Selbourne, she was a rejected author. Her first novel, *What Was Lost*, was rejected by 20 agents and publishers before one editor saw its potential.

O'Flynn's novel is hard to be classified. "The publishers didn't know which shelf they would put my book on. Was it a ghost story, a mystery or romance?" O'Flynn said.

The book opens with a section told by 10-year-old Kate in 1984, dreaming of a life as a gumshoe. She observes shoppers and follows "suspects" at the newly opened Green Oaks shopping center near her neighborhood in Birmingham, training herself to be a private detective.

Then one day she disappears.

Twenty years later, an insomniac security guard in the mall sees the missing girl on his monitors. With little else to do on the late shift, he investigates its connection to the mall's unsettling history.

Born in 1970 and raised in Birmingham, O'Flynn worked in a shopping mall. "Many of the shopping malls in the 1980s in the UK were built on abandoned industrial sites. Shoppers saw the shining goods in the mall

by day, and only the staff knew how desolate it was by night," she said.

While working at the mall, she heard rumors from the security guards about a little girl appearing on the screens of the monitor in the evening.

"It may have been a hoax, but it was good material for me to develop a story," she said. "I hope the readers see in it another side of urban life."

Birmingham was once a prosperous city, but after World War II, people demolished its Victorian past in search of modernity.

"The planners admit it was a mistake and have decided to rebuild the old structures again like a circle around the modern ones," she said. "I don't think a modern and shining face means a city is more prosperous. On the contrary, I think its artifice makes people insecure."

Rural and urban

Ross Raisin moved away from the popular urban setting to observe rural isolation and disturbed adolescence in his first novel, *God's Own Country*, which won the Sunday Times Young Writers of the Year Award last year.

A 19-year-old boy, Sam, lives with his parents on a sheep farm in Yorkshire. He has spent the past three years working the farm because he was expelled from school after a classmate accused him of sexual assault.

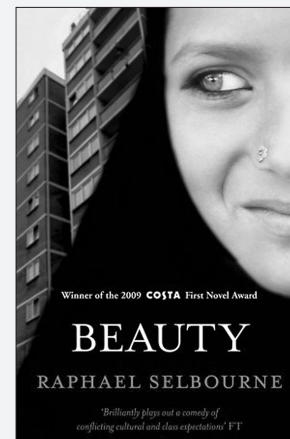
When he learns his new neighbor is a 15-year-old blonde from London, he becomes obsessed with the girl. She is lonely and confides in him, and together they plan an elopement fated to end in tragedy.

Born in Yorkshire in 1979, Raisin sees the gaps between urban and rural life. "Many rich people from the cities are buying houses in rural areas for the clean air and beautiful scenery. To rural residents, this is like an invasion," Raisin said.

In the novel, Sam feels irritated by the ramblers who have bought up neighboring farms in search of a postcard view out of their bedroom window.

"The girl represents urban life in my book," the author said. "In the UK, there is a popular TV program called *Escape to the Country*, which encourages the rich and successful people to go to rural areas. But I don't think they really understand what rural life is and don't care how rural residents live."

Remarks of the three debut books

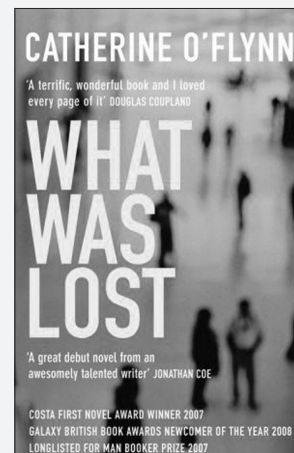


Beauty

By Raphael Selbourne, 326pp, Tindal Street Press, \$13.95

"Captures the raw humanity of inner-city life with extraordinary authenticity."

— Judges of the Costa First Novel Award

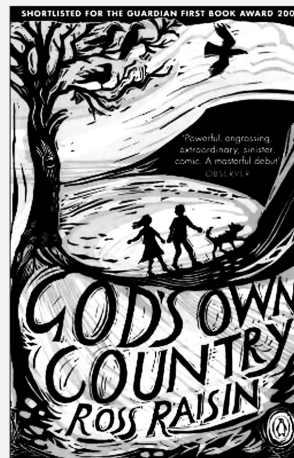


What Was Lost

By Catherine O'Flynn, 256pp, Tindal Street Press, \$14

"Hugely compelling and inventive, it pulls the rug from under your feet from the very first page – O'Flynn reveals her clues tantalizingly in this poignant story of love and loss."

— Judges of the Costa First Novel Award



God's Own Country

By Ross Raisin, 224pp, Penguin, \$14.99

"Remarkable, compelling, very funny and very disturbing ... like no other character in contemporary fiction."

— Sunday Times Young Writer of the Year Award

Geeks search for high-tech earphones

By Wang Yu

TV dramas and movies like *The Big Bang Theory* and *The Social Network* have helped to spread American geek culture. In a very short time, China has accepted the odd obsession with science fiction and modern technology.

But geek spirit has long existed in certain subcultures of China. To wit, audiophiles.

Huge stereo systems can be a sinkhole for new audiophiles, so many new sound lovers cut their teeth on quality headphones. They are usually much smaller and very portable. As with stereo systems, fans have come up with a few ways to make their own super headphones.

This summer, the young Ph.D candidate Deng Jia invested in a pair of q-Jays, Swedish earphones for the iPod Classic. The white earphones match the iPod's color and are comfortable to wear with natural bass and sweet midtones.

Back at home, Deng has another five pairs of earphones, each designed for a different type of music.

"After years of obsessing over earphones I decided to keep things simple. All I needed was an iPod and a pair of comfortable earphones," Deng says. "This isn't stamp collecting - we buy these things to listen to the music."

Like many young portable audio fans, Deng received his first portable cassette tape player from an aunt who was living in the US 15 years ago. The earphones included with the Sony Walkman were average quality, but Deng was stunned by their Hi-Fi sound.

That pair was Deng's favorite until he bought a Sennheiser MX-500 in college. In 2001, the earphone and headphone scene was still niche and most who purchased them did so only to supplement a growing home stereo system.

"Now most audio stores let buyers demo their products. That wasn't how it worked a decade ago," Deng says. He had to visit several stores and befriend the owners to get the chance to test anything.

It wasn't long before Deng invested again in a pair of Koss earphones with extra bass for hip-hop music.

While neither of the earphones was a luxury product, they did help Deng discover the audiophile scene. Shop owners pointed him to several online forums for audiophiles that were around during the genesis of the scene.

These communities occasionally organize offline for fans. Usually they meet in a room and bring their equipment to experiment with several songs played on several combinations of players and earphones. A big event can draw 20 people with a variety of gadgets.

Sound-test meetings are more regular. Li Jun, an insurance client manager, is also a Hi-Fi earphone fan. He used to travel to friends' homes carrying his huge speakers and cables to hook them up to someone else's equipment. The portability of earphones makes it much easier.

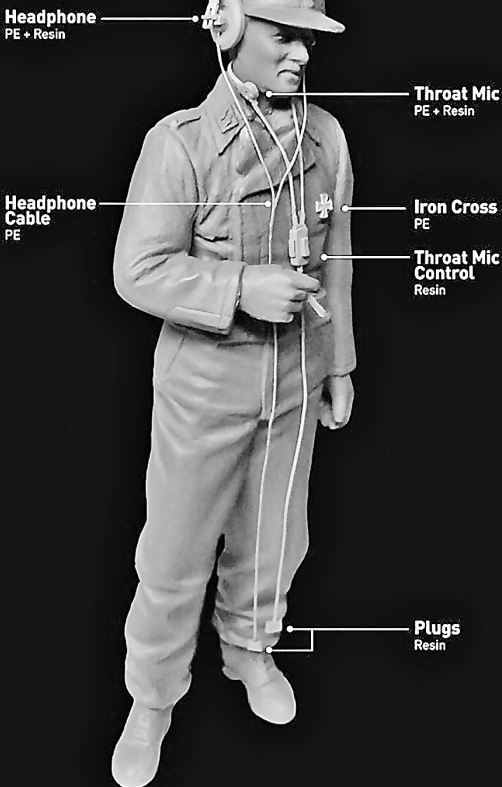
In addition to earphones, most fans buy a portable audio amplifier. Most CD and MP3 players do not have enough power to drive quality earphones, so amplifiers can solve this problem while boosting quality. The market is awash in portable amplifiers both domestically made and imported.

More technologically-oriented fans just build their own. Basic circuit diagrams are readily available online, and most of the components can be purchased in common electronics shops or on Taobao.

"I have only one amplifier, but it is a bit heavy for carrying on the street. I have one friend who wears big headphones and carries the amplifier in his bag. It looks weird, but it shows how passionate he is about it," says Vincent Wen, an IT engineer.

Sometimes audiophiles let their passion for sound erode their appreciation for music. A fringe group listens to songs that are good for testing equipment but weak compositionally. Since the early years, the unplugged version of The Eagles' "Hotel California" and recordings of Taiwanese singer Cai Qin have been used as a de facto litmus test for Hi-Fi equipment.

In fact, many spend more time updating their equipment than their music library. "Expect for the headphones I use in the studio, I almost never use Hi-Fi equipment to listen to music. After all, earphones are only one part of the experience," says Madseed, a sound engineer.

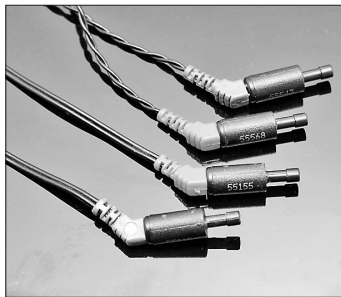


Popular earphones



Westone UM3X

Westone's high-end UM series has different options for users with different needs. The UM3X is designed for musicians to use onstage when they need to monitor and mix sound. However, the earphone is also perfect for ordinary users who expect more. It has three balanced armature drivers with a passive three-way crossover.



Etymotic Research ER-4

Etymotic entered the Chinese Hi-Fi scene very early and built a reputation for quality. As a manufacturer whose products are geared towards scientists and hearing-impaired individuals, the ER series earphones look more like a medical device. The ER-4's sound is smooth and accurate, though it lacks bass. Overall, it is well suited to classical music. However, the impedance of the earphone is high and will require an amp.



Bose In-Ear 2

Bose is famous for its home stereo system and satellite speakers. But its In-Ear earphones are pretty balanced products. The sound is typically Bose with plenty of bass and sweet midtones for pop music. The new In-Ear 2 works with most ordinary MP3 players.

q-Jays

From Sweden, the q-Jays is almost too small for male user to hold. However the tiny double-driver speakers offer sound accurate enough for an audio engineer. What is convenient is that the q-JAYS package includes seven sets of silicone rubber tips to fit any user's ears. A small zippered leather carrying case is also available to protect the device.



Small items for practical use

By Annie Wei

There is one more week before Thanksgiving. It's time to shop again!
You don't have to wait for Black Friday to start your shopping. Here are some items worth the price at any time.



Humidifier

Xiankankan is a Taobao store that sells interesting items at affordable prices.

Indoor heating dries out the air, which can make your rooms uncomfortable. A humidifier can help. One cup of water lasts 8 to 10 hours. Perfect for the home or office.

Price: 65 yuan

Website:

xiankankan.taobao.com



Bobbi Brown

This brand has introduced new products like metallic long-wear cream shadow (300 yuan) and long-wear gel eyeliner (250 yuan). All come in eight or nine colors.

Where: Shin Kong Plaza, 87
Jianguo Lu, Chaoyang District
Open: 10 am – 10 pm
Tel: 6530 5888



Mini health scale

Only half the size of a book, this scale can weigh things up to 150 kilograms. Good for small apartments.

Price 65 yuan

Website: xiankankan.taobao.com



Photos provided by xiankankan.taobao/Bobbi Brown/Emoi

Emoi

Emoi has opened its store at the Village North. It's a small space with items such as an organic cotton bag (129 to 289 yuan), felt vase (39-49 yuan), double wall trundle glass (39 to 59 yuan) and trolley bag (999 yuan).

Where: B1, 11 Sanlitun Lu, Chaoyang District
Open: 10 am – 8 pm
Tel: 6590 2525



Sun jar

Charge the jar by placing it under the sun and it can provide light for several hours. If you go to the beach over the holiday, bring the jar with you for a night swim.

Price: 269 yuan

Website: xiankankan.taobao.com

The anti-bottle

Environmentally concerned people carry their own chopsticks instead of using disposable ones, but they rarely have their own bottles. Why is that? Because they're not as portable. The Vapur anti-bottle changes that: it's foldable and light, with a capacity of 180 milliliters. It can also be used as an ice bag for the freezer.

Price: 126 yuan

Website: xiankankan.taobao.com



Food at your doorstep

17

Food

By Annie Wei

A simple phone call can get you more than just junk food from McDonald's or box meals from your local eatery; high-quality meats, fish, seafood and wine can be delivered as well.

Beijing Today suggests these quality restaurants and vendors that deliver.



Quality veal for a romantic dinner

By Annie Wei

Veal is not commonly found in morning markets or even high-end supermarkets like BHG, which is a shame because it's a low-fat, high-protein meat with a tender and smooth texture and light creamy aroma – a good option for diners who crave beef but want something healthier.

Most veal dishes are only available in high-end restaurants, where you find it simmered with potatoes or Italian mushrooms. French restaurants offer some classic veal dishes: stuffed paupiette, roast joints and blanquettes.

Those interested in cooking veal at home can contact Shines Group, a

domestic company with a factory in Tianjin that delivers veal products to Beijing restaurants and families.

The company provides different parts of veal, prices ranging from 30 yuan per kilogram – like rib bones or small intestines – to 680 yuan per kilogram for tenderloin. The tenderloin and striploin (430 yuan per kilogram) are most used in Western restaurants. The meat is very tender and suitable for frying under low temperatures.

The striploin is best when roasted.

For a homemade meal, Li Bo, a sales assistant at Shine's, suggests the thick flank (110 yuan per kilogram)

or chuck tender (110 yuan).

Yang Yanhua, a wine salesman, suggests pairing veal dishes with lighter wines. Some soft red wines like pinot noir can reflect the tenderness of veal. He also suggests white wines when veal is served in heavy cream sauces, and rose wines as well.

Shine's Group – veal producer

Where: E2-1707, The Oriental Plaza, 1 East Chang'an Avenue, Dongcheng District
Tel: 8518 8808

Baode

This six-year-old company delivers imported food from all over the world to restaurants, hotels and families.
Tel: 4006873663

Hotpot, delivered with pot and waiters

By Annie Wei

Haidilao is a hotpot chain known for its good service, fresh and clean dishes, authentic Sichuan flavor and reasonable prices. A line of people usually forms at its doors every night. Those who wait can enjoy free tea, fruits and even a manicure service.

Faced with intense competition and increasing rent, the company decided to offer hotpot delivery service three months ago. There are about 100 orders every night, which is about the amount of business a medium-sized hotpot restaurant can expect.

Haidilao offers three kinds of standard delivery meals (208 yuan), complete with broth and five dipping sauces. Customers choose their dishes, including tofu (16 yuan) and Napa cabbage (11 yuan). Half-orders are available for meat and seafood.

There is a delivery fee, but it's a reasonable 19 yuan if delivering within 10 kilometers.

For 29 yuan, plus a 300 yuan deposit, the restaurant offers delivery of cooking equipment, including an electromagnetic cooker, a pot, a few big spoons, napkins, aprons and a dustbin. The deposit is returned when the restaurant comes to collect the wares after your meal. You don't



even have to wash any dishes!

Beijing Today suggests not asking for aprons when calling for delivery, as they are disposable and bad for the environment.

You can also ask for a personal server. For 99 yuan, a handyman from the restaurant will wait at your home table, preparing everything, boiling the food and mixing your sauces.

If you want a hotpot picnic, Haidilao can do that, too. If you're going more than 30 kilometers outside of Fifth Ring Road, the fee is 150 yuan. The minimum order also has to be at least 500 yuan.

Unlike smaller restaurants that deliver via bike, Haidilao's

deliverers drive cars, making traffic the main problem for Haidilao's delivery service. The restaurant recommends people place their orders three hours in advance on weekends and holidays. If you live outside Fifth Ring Road, you should place an order half a day in advance.

Haidilao has many outlets in town, but only four places take deliveries. Interested diners can call 4008107107 or visit 4008107107.com for more information. The service is pay on delivery.

Haidilao hotpot delivery

Web site: 4008107107.com
Open: 11 am – 9 pm
Tel: 4008107107



Fast food restaurants that deliver

Guilin Mifen

This small restaurant with four red characters – Guilin Mifen – mushroomed everywhere in town. Honestly speaking, the food quality is suspicious: too much salt, MSG and artificial chicken flavoring. But once in a while, when you need an alternative to KFC or McDonald's at a cheap price, Guilin Mifen is just fine. No matter whether you are ordering a simple rice noodle with vegetables and meat (7 to 14 yuan) or a bowl of dessert like green bean soup (6 yuan), they will deliver for free.

Where: Across the street from No. 80 Middle School, 4-9 Baijiazhuang

Xi Li, Chaoyang District (and several other locations)

Open: 24 hours
Tel: 6501 1154

Che Cool

A small dessert store with three outlets at Andingmen Nei Dajie, Xi Dawang Lu and Haidian District. All milk teas are 3 yuan for a small cup and 5 for a large. It offers delivery within the neighborhood.

Where: North of Exit A of Xi Dawang Lu subway station, Chaoyang District
Open: 10 am – 8 pm
Tel: 8637 4487

CFP Photos

Editor: Wei Ying Designer: Jiang Nan

BEIJING TODAY

Five decades of South Korean cinema come to Beijing

By He Jianwei

In sharp contrast with the Chinese film market, South Korean moviegoers prefer spending money at theaters for domestic films instead of international ones. South Korean movies have not only dominated box office earnings, but they've also won several international awards in the past 50 years.

Starting today, the Korean Film Council will present 20 movies by 20 directors at Broadway Cinematheque. Most of the films are being screened in Beijing for the first time.

South Korea's movie industry gained international renown when its art films began winning awards at high-profile film festivals. Fittingly, the opening and closing films presented by the Korean Film Council are art flicks from famous directors.

The opening film *One Fine Spring Day* by is Heo Jin-ho, who has been prestigious ever since his debut movie, *Christmas in August*, which was considered a masterpiece of the romance genre.

One Fine Spring Day is his second feature romance, made in 2001, portraying a love affair that began one spring and declined exactly a year later.

Although not a commercial success, critics raved about the film's cinematography, particularly its long takes.

The closing film is Kim Ki-duk's *Spring, Summer, Fall, Winter... and Spring*. Kim portrays the joy, anger, sorrow and pleasure of people's lives through four seasons and through the life of a Buddhist monk who lives in a temple floating on a lake in a pristine forest.

Kim's movies are a frequent entry in international festivals, such as the Berlin International Film Festival and Venice Film Festival.

Other selections include *Memories of Murder* – the most-watched movie in Korea in 2003 – which is based off a true story about a series of murders occurred in the country between 1986 and 1991.

South Korean Movie Showcase

Where: Broadway Cinematheque, 2/F Building 4, north section of Museum of Modern Art (MOMA), 1 Xiangheyuan Lu, Dongcheng District

When: November 26 – December 5

Admission: 40 yuan per film, 30 yuan for students

Tel: 8438 8258 ext. 8008

For the programs: b-cinema.cn

5 Friday, November 26

Exhibition Collage of Memories – Korean Con- temporary Art

Ten Korean artists show their understanding of media, history, culture, globalization and identity.

Where: Soka Art Center, 798 Art District, 2 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District

When: Until January 2, daily except Monday, 11 am – 6 pm

Admission: Free

Tel: 5978 4808

Movie Millennium Actress (2001)

This Japanese anime is the story of a director, Genya Tachibana, who makes a documentary about a famous actress, Chiyoko Fujiwara, who has been withdrawn from public life for 30 years.

Where: China Film Archive, 3 Wenhuiyuan Lu, Xiaoxitian, Haidian District

When: 7 pm

Admission: 20 yuan

Tel: 8229 6153

Nightlife Chasing Stars

Featuring the vocal of actress Guo Keyu with electronics and bass by veteran player Ou Yang, Chasing Stars is an electro pop band.

Where: Yugongyishan, 3-2 Zhangzizhong Lu, Dongcheng District

When: 9 pm

Admission: 40 yuan advance purchase, 60 yuan at the door

Tel: 6404 2711

Sunday, November 28

Exhibition Liu Ding's Store – Liu Ding Solo Exhi- bition

The artist uses a model shop to establish a platform for thinking and discussing what really matters in a consumer society.

Where: Galerie Urs Meile, 104 Caochangdi Village, Cuigezhuang, Chaoyang District

When: Until January 24, daily except Monday, 11 am – 6 pm

Admission: Free

Tel: 6433 3393

Movie The Longwang Chronicles (2007)

Director Li Yifan spent two years chronicling Chinese small-town life in Longwang Village, a southwestern village in the Three Gorges Dam

6 Saturday, November 27

Exhibition Lightscape – Yang Yong Solo Exhi- bition

Yang's installation of 200 hanging lamps reflects people's obsession with today's global media.

Where: Ullens Center for Contemporary Art (UCCA), 798 Art District, 4 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District

When: Until January 9, daily except Monday, 10 am – 6 pm

Admission: 15 yuan, 10 yuan for students, free on Thursdays

Tel: 8459 9269

Movie Kont Diga (I Was, Already) (2009)

Karl returns to Malta after many years abroad and seeks a connection to his roots. But he realizes he is no longer the person he once was and wonders whether he can truly return to the place he used to call home.

Where: French Cultural

Center, 1/F, Guangcai International Mansion, 18 Gongti Xi Lu, Chaoyang District

When: 3 pm

Admission: Free

Tel: 6553 2627

Nightlife Reflector

Founded in 1997, this funk rock band released its latest album, *Explain You*, in April.

Where: Mao Livehouse, 111 Gulou Dong Dajie, Dongcheng District

When: 9 pm

Admission: 60 yuan advance purchase, 80 yuan at the door

Tel: 6402 5080

Upcoming

Nightlife Das Racist

This rap group based in Brooklyn is known for its use of humor and has just released its 2010 mix tapes, *Shut Up, Dude* and *Sit Down, Man*.

Where: Yugongyishan, 3-2 Zhangzizhong Lu, Dongcheng District

When: November 30, 9 pm

Admission: 50 yuan advance purchase, 80 yuan at the door

Tel: 6404 2711

Stage in December

Concert

Fou Ts'ong Piano Recital

Where: Concert Hall of the National Center for the Performing Arts, 2 Xi Chang'an Jie, Xicheng District

When: December 4, 7:30 pm

Admission: 100-600 yuan

Tel: 6655 0000

Maksim Mrvica Piano Recital

Where: Beijing Exhibition Center Theater, 135 Xizhimen Wai Dajie, Xicheng District

When: December 4, 7:30 pm

Admission: 100-1,500 yuan

Tel: 5129 7260

Wolfram Schmitt-Leonardy Piano Recital

Where: Forbidden City Concert Hall (inside Zhongshan Park), 18 Zhaodengyu Lu, Xicheng District

When: December 12, 7:30 pm

Admission: 30-380 yuan

Tel: 6417 7845

New Year Concert by Wiener Johann Strauss Walzer Orchester

Where: Center Theater, 40 Liangmaqiao Lu, Chaoyang District

When: December 29-30,

7:30 pm

Admission: 180-880 yuan

Tel: 6462 8470

Dance

Swan Lake

Where: Opera House of the National Center for the Performing Arts, 2 Xi Chang'an Jie, Xicheng District

When: December 9-12, 7:30 pm

Admission: 180-680 yuan

Tel: 6655 0000

Drama

Jane Eyre

Where: Theater Hall of the National Center for the Performing Arts, 2 Xi Chang'an Jie, Xicheng District

When: December 9-23,

7:30 pm

Admission: 180-580 yuan

Tel: 6655 0000

Grand Expectations

Where: Poly Theater, 14 Dongzhimen Nan Dajie, Dongcheng District

When: December 16-19,

7:30 pm

Admission: 100-880 yuan

Tel: 6551 8058

Opera

Farewell to Cambridge

Where: Multi-functional Theater of the National Center for the Performing Arts, 2 Xi Chang'an Jie, Xicheng District

When: December 15-19, 7:30 pm

Admission: 200-320 yuan

Tel: 6655 0000

(By He Jianwei)

region.

Where: Ullens Center for Contemporary Art (UCCA), 798 Art District, 4 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District

When: 7 pm

Admission: 15 yuan, 10 yuan for students

Tel: 8459 9269

Nightlife The Village

This drama is about the people who built temporary vil-

lages in Taiwan 60 years ago after Kuomintang soldiers and their families fled there following Chiang Kai-shek's defeat on the mainland.

Where: Poly Theater, 14 Dongzhimen Nan Dajie, Dongcheng District

When: 7:30 pm

Admission: 100-1,280 yuan

Tel: 6551 8058

Fathers can have the baby blues too

By Li Zhixin

Postpartum depression is most associated with mothers, but fathers too can suffer from its symptoms. Because most have no experience with fatherhood and face a changed relationship with their wife, many new fathers have a hard time adapting.

Liao Hui, a 36-year-old graphics designer, and his wife spent four years trying to have a baby for four years. Both love children and thought an addition to the family would make life more interesting.

However, Liao has been down since his wife first became pregnant a year and a half ago. "I always thought that my wife and I were close. We had been together for six years before having a baby, but then it seemed that having a child almost tore us apart," he said.

When his wife was in her final month of pregnancy, she developed hypertension. Her child was born by caesarean section, but the incision on her belly remained inflamed long after the birth. He was torn between work and hospital visits for weeks, and eventually quit his job to look after his wife.

However, his wife bonded with the baby and began to criticize Liao in everything he did.

"I felt like a spare part," he said. "She knew several other young moms in the community and started inviting them over. When they came to our apartment, I didn't know what I was supposed to do. I started leaving home because it was so uncomfortable."

Since then, he and his wife have clashed endlessly.

"She tells me I should get a job and earn money, but I think right now I need to be taking care of both of them while she recovers. It seems so unfair," he said.

He also said he could not get close to his son, because the boy cries for his mom and she always takes him away.

As Liao felt more distant, he began to be very irritated by both the baby's crying and his wife's voice. "However, I can't show my negative emotions in front of them. I have to just bury my head in the quilt or go out drinking," he said.

It wasn't long before he lost interest in everything and began having difficulty sleeping. "I was really irritable and not eating properly. Many friends said I looked rough and old and told me to see a doctor," he said.

After six months of psychological counseling, Liao says he feels happier at home and frequently gives suggestions to his male friends and colleagues who are going to be fathers.

"For new parents, the focus of attention shifts in a way that is both a gain and a loss. It is not unusual for new parents to feel depressed after a birth," said Han Meiling, a psy-

chologist at Beijing Meiling Psychological Counseling Center.

The pressures of fatherhood, increased responsibility at home, financial worries, serious changes in the relationship with one's wife and a change in lifestyle can contribute to feelings of depression often overlooked by other family members.

"Postpartum depression is more common among those who have been diagnosed with depression before or whose partners are also suffering from postpartum depression. It is also more common in first-time fathers," she said.

To have a new baby is a life-changing event and a challenge. It involves physical exhaustion and extra worries. It can be especially difficult to

balance the demands of work and fatherhood, as men feel under pressure to earn more money while their partner is off work.

Many sufferers report feeling overwhelmed, isolated and confused by their feelings and by their partner's behavior.

Other symptoms of postpartum depression in men include loss of interest in work, hobbies and sex, significant weight loss or gain, trouble sleeping, restlessness, fatigue, reduced concentration, indecisiveness, aggression, impulsiveness risk taking — especially in reckless driving and extramarital sex — self-doubt and thoughts of death or suicide.

Children of families with a depressed father are more likely to develop behavioral and emotional problems. "Fathers who are depressed after the birth

are less likely to read, play with or tell stories to their babies, but these all are key ingredients of a happy, enriching relationship," she said. "They are more likely to be irritable, aggressive and sometimes hostile. Some even see the future as bleak and hopeless."

"Never ignore these feelings and soldier on, as the condition can affect your quality of life and ruin your marriage," Han said.

Some men take up drinking or smoking to cope, but short-term fixes do not solve depression. "Remember, your health is important not only to you but to your baby and to your partner," she said.

First-time fathers are more likely to recover quickly if they can acknowledge the problem and seek a solution. "Asking for support or practical help from your family members or friends or consulting a psychologist from the start are best. Don't expect your family to ask you how you are feeling; they will only be paying attention to your wife and child," she said.

Tips

It may be extremely difficult for you to take any action to help yourself when you have the blues, but it is important to realize that these feelings are part of depression and do not accurately reflect actual circumstances. As you begin to recognize your depression and begin to adjust, negative thinking will fade.

1. Engage yourself in mild exercise. Go to a concert or a movie or play a game like ping-pong. You can also take part in religious, social or other activities that you once enjoyed.

2. Break up large tasks into small ones, set some priorities and do what you can.

3. Spend some time with your best friend or relative and try to confide in them. Don't isolate yourself; let others help you.

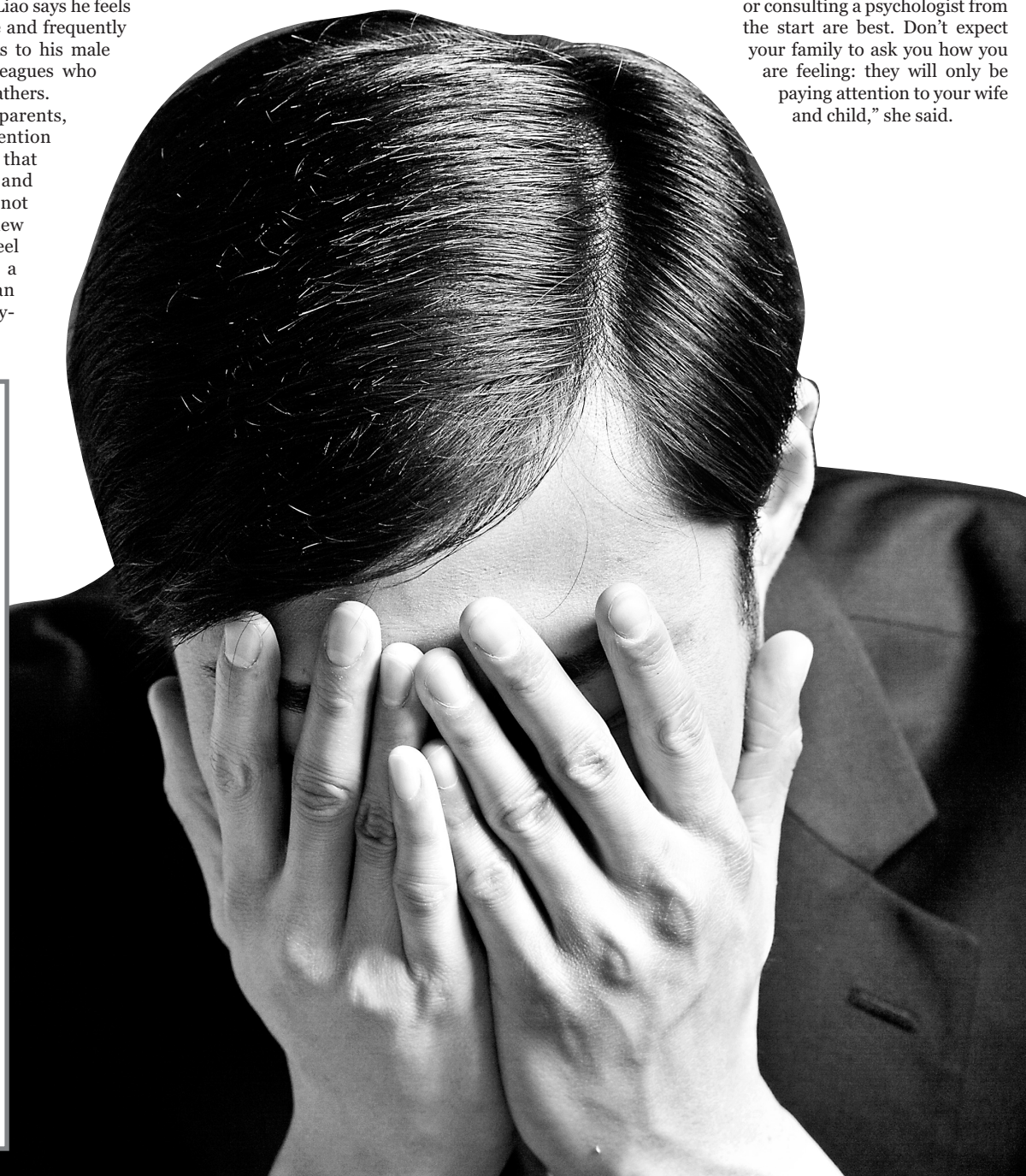
4. Do not expect to immediately be free of your depression. Sleep and appetite will improve before your bad mood lifts.

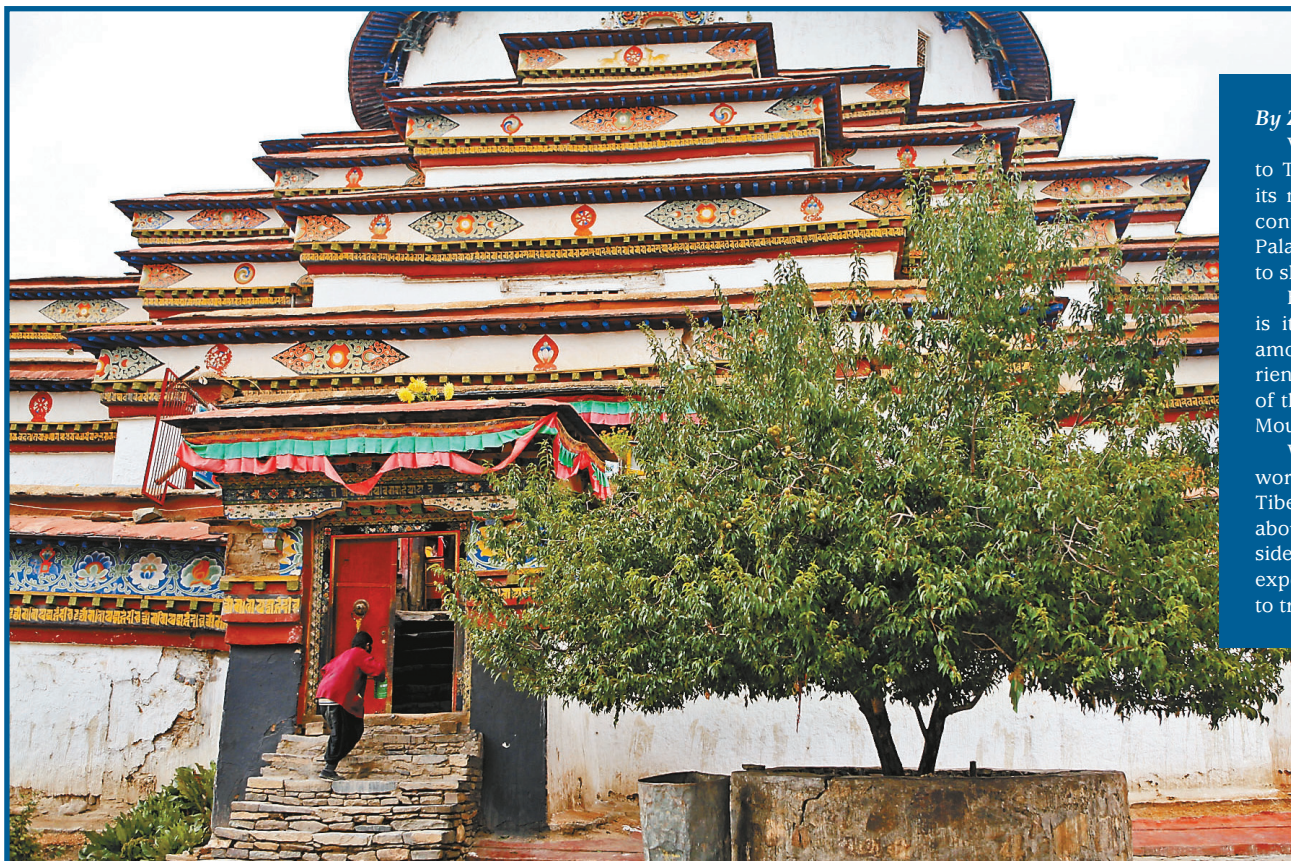
5. Postpone making important decisions, such as getting married or divorced or changing jobs, until you feel better. Discuss decisions with others who know you well and have a more objective view of your situation.

6. Set realistic goals.

7. Remember that positive thinking will replace negative thoughts as your depression responds to treatment.

CFP Photo





By Zhang Dongya

Visitors from all over the globe flock to Tibet every year to have a glimpse of its mystery and magnificence. Many are content to take a picture in front of Potala Palace in the capital city of Lhasa in order to show friends back home.

But the most essential part of Tibet is its plateau scenery, which is hidden among cordillera. The best place to experience this is in Ali, located at the nexus of the Kunlun Mountain Range, Gangdise Mountains and the Himalayas.

While Tibet is called the "roof of the world," Ali has been dubbed "the roof of Tibet." The route to Ali, a loop that takes about 20 days to complete by car, is considered the most adventurous and exciting experience in Tibet. *Beijing Today* talked to travelers who have taken this trip.

Palkor Monastery is famous for the "one-hundred-thousand pagoda," consisting of hundreds of sutra halls.

A long journey to Ali, the roof of Tibet

Natural beauty and cultural relics

Leaving Lhasa, you'll first come to the southern part of Ali, which features snow-capped mountains and cultural and historical attractions, like old temples.

The path you'll want to take is called the southern way of Xinjiang-Tibet Road, also known as the "southern line." One important city on the path is Shigatse, situated in southwest Tibet. The biggest temple here is Tashihunpo Monastery, built in 1447 during the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644).

The grand temple, which is closed between noon and 2 pm, attracts both pious and secular people from different regions and countries.

Another famous temple is Palkor Monastery, built in 1418. It accepts three sects of Tibetan Buddhism – sakyas, kadampa and gelukpa – and has architecture that fuses the three styles.

One attraction in the temple is the "one-hundred-thousand pagoda." With hundreds of sutra halls, it is one of the largest and most intricate pagodas in Tibet. In the sutra halls, there are more than a hundred thousand images from Buddhism, and thousands of Buddhas made of mud, bronze and gold.

There are many smaller temples along the southern road. Villages and hamlets are also dotted along the way, some of which provide lodging for travelers.

Past Shigatse, there are fewer temples and villages. The natural landscape becomes the attraction.

The first stop after Shigatse is the headquarters of Qomolangma Mount, which was built to protect the area's environment.

In the past, cars had to stop at Rongphu Monastery and people had to transfer take a horse carriage or walk to the headquarters, but now visitors can drive directly into it. Locals have tents that provide lodging, and there are teashops, shops and even postal service. Visitors can take a break at the headquarters before continuing on their journey.

Although the skies are usually clear in Tibet, the faraway Qomolangma is sometimes concealed by the clouds. Patient visitors should wait for the clouds to disperse to have a look at the splendid mountain.

The road past Shigatse is partly gravel. Some parts are still under construction, but will not affect passage.

The last stop is at Pulan County, located at the boundary of China, India and Nepal. The border town is bustling with trade of spice, cloth, jewelry and coffee. It is also famous for the Manasarovar Lake and Kailash Mountain, which are called "divine lake" and "divine mountain" in legend.

Continued on page 21...



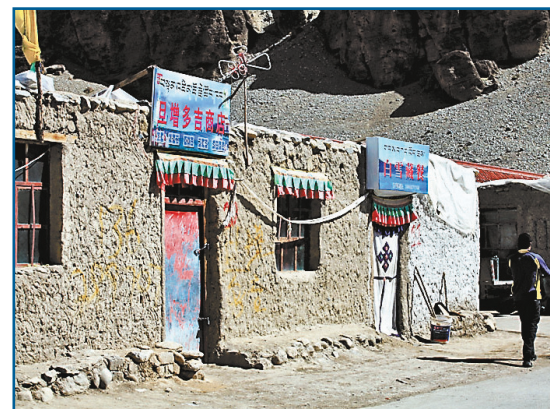
Mount Qomolangma peeking through the clouds is stunning sight.



A Tibetan girl in local ethnic dress



Tashihunpo Monastery is the biggest temple in the city of Shigatse.



Pulan County, located at the boundary of China, India and Nepal, is bustling with trade of spice, cloth, jewelry and coffee.

Photos by Zhao Yan

...continued from page 20

**Wild animals
on the northern route**

After arriving at Shiquanhe Town, the journey continues on the “northern line,” where one can spot lots of wild animals.

The northern line is very deserted, with fewer villages along the way. The distance between towns is far, and it’s possible to not see another person for hundreds of kilometers: it’s much more likely to encounter animals like wild donkeys and Tibetan gazelles.

Donkeys always appear in groups, with 20 or 30 together. Seeing wild donkeys, experienced drivers will drive directly at them. The flock will run fast at first but come to a stop when the cars pull alongside or pass them. Visitors can take this opportunity to get off the car and take pictures.

On the slopes, lucky travelers will see Tibetan gazelles. They are usually found in twos and threes with their heads buried into the ground, grazing. Gazelles are often mistaken for Tibetan antelopes, but drivers will tell you that gazelles have characteristic heart-shaped white bottoms.

Gazelles are timid around cars and people, and will turn their tail and sprint

away if they catch you staring.

In the sky, visitors will see large crows with big beaks. They appear in flocks, but sometimes you can find a stray one.

On the slopes are small mounds – the dens of a special kind of fox that can only be found in Tibet. They look like fat squirrels, jumping from mound to mound.

The journey on the northern line is comparatively harder for average travelers. There are very few hotels, so sometimes travelers will have to sleep in their vehicles. Sometimes it’s hard finding a place to eat, so be sure to stock up on food.

In other villages, small shops will have daily necessities, but sold at high prices. Hotels come with only the simplest of facilities. The major restaurants along the roads are mostly operated by people from Sichuan.

Adventurous travelers on the northern road may want to visit Shuang Hu, or Double Lake. There’s unique scenery there, but the roads are particularly treacherous. Those with two or more cars can have a try.

The last stop is Namtso, one of the three divine lakes in Tibet. From there you will loop back to Lhasa and end your journey there.

Travel information

Trains to Lhasa from Beijing take two full days. The daytime temperature reaches 15 C at most. In the early morning and at night, it will drop below freezing.

Trips to Ali are wrapping up for the year, as it will snow soon, which will seal off the mountains.

With more and more people trekking to Ali, locals have started a car rental service. To drive along the Sichuan-Tibet line, Yunan-Tibet line or Ali loop line, it’s recommended that you rent an SUV. The trip takes between 14

to 20 days, depending on your schedule. It costs between 15,000 to 25,000 yuan to rent a car.

Starting from the end of 2008, all official tour cars have license plates that begin with L. Although fees are lower with unlicensed tour cars, they don’t come with insurance.

Most drivers are experienced, since the long-distance trip to Ali has become popular in the last two to three years. Drivers usually take more than five trips to Ali every year.



Tashihunpo Monastery, in the city of Shigatse, attracts both pious and secular people from many different regions and countries.



A special kind of fox in Tibet. Visitors can see their dens, which look like mounds from the road.



Tibetan gazelles are often mistaken for Tibetan antelopes, but drivers will tell you that gazelles have characteristic heart-shaped white bottoms.



Wild donkeys are commonly seen on the northern route in Ali.
Photos by Zhao Yan



There are several divine lakes along the northern line to Ali.

Dining



Merry Christmas

Romance is not just about ambiance: it's also about taste and smell. Enjoy the magic of Christmas at Valley Cafe over a scrumptious seafood buffet, a pepper-oyster blade of beef steak, irresistible desserts and a selection of East-meets-West specialties. The restaurant is also serving promotional "MUM" champagne with smoked salmon, caviar and canapes.

Where: Valley Cafe, Crown Plaza Beijing Zhongguancun, 106 Zhichun Lu, Haidian District
Tel: 5993 8888

Bring home some Christmas cheer

Indulge in the season of giving with Grand Millennium Beijing's Festive Goodies. A sumptuous array of the season's finest are available for family, friends and colleagues. Choose between the bestselling Havana "Cigar & Rum" Men's Gift

Basket for 896 yuan, CBD Culinary Gift Basket for 866 yuan and Grand Millennium Traditional Christmas Gift Basket for 996 yuan. Also available are roasted turkeys with chestnut stuffing and cranberry sauce and honey-glazed ham.

Where: Grand Millennium Beijing, 7 Dong-sanhuan Zhong Lu, Chaoyang District
Tel: 6530 9383

Adventure at Sunworld Dynasty Cruise

Sumptuous delicacies, glorious performances, wonderful gifts and unexpected prizes. Join Sunworld on Christmas Eve for a fantastic adventure cruise around the world.

Where: Dynasty Plaza, Sunworld Dynasty Hotel, 50 Wangfujing Dajie, Dongcheng District
When: 7-12 pm, December 24

Cost: 3,680 per adult, 4,680 per VIP, children shorter than 1.4 meters eat half price; 9,980 VIP Package, 33,800 Royal Package; 688 yuan per Gift Basket

Tel: 5816 8888 ext. 8302 or 8358

Black & White theme of 2010

Come attend the Kempinski International Ball on December 4. Enjoy a five-course gala dinner with red and white wines. Enjoy the ball atmosphere, live band and raffle.

Where: Kempinski Hotel Shenyang, 109 Qing Nian Jie, Shen He District, Shenyang, Liaoning Province

Cost: 799 yuan

Tel: 024 2298 8988

Hot Spring Resort



Wendu Shuicheng

Located 20 kilometers to the north of Beijing, Wendu Shuicheng has five hot spring wells tunneling 3,000 meters underground to where the water is a steaming 79 C. Its daily mineral-rich water output exceeds 10,000 cubic meters. It can accommodate 1,200 persons in its 35 hot spring tubs, six private indoor spa pools and 40 massage compartments.

Where: Zhenggezhuangcun, Beiqijia Zhen, Changping District

Tel: 8178 1111 or 8888

Web: wendushuicheng.com

Jiuhua Shanzhuang

Water at Jiuhua hot spring originates 1,230 meters underground where temperatures stay around 40 C. Its pools are rich in microelements such as strontium, lithium and metasilicic acid, which promote circulation and boost the metabolism. The unstable microelements have an outstanding healing effect on various skin conditions.

Jiuhua has 21 types of hot spring baths and more than 40 pools, including an Herbal Bath, Elephant Pool and Wine-tasting Pool.

Where: Xiaotangshan, Changping District

Tel: 6178 2288

Web: jiuhua.com.cn

Yujinxiang Hot Spring Garden Resort

Adjacent to Capital International Airport, Yujinxiang Hot Spring is accessible by private and

public transportation. The water originates 3,000 meters below ground and remains heated to 65 C.

Its indoor water park — Morui Water World — is Beijing's largest. It has 56 water sport activities for children, four sauna rooms and 21 Spa pools.

Where: Jinzhan Yujinxiang Garden, Dongwei Lu, Chaoyang District

Tel: 8433 7403 or 8104

Web: bjyujinxiang.com



Longmai Hot Spring Village

Longmai Hot Spring Village is located near the Great Wall and Ming Tombs, making it an excellent choice for tourists. Guests can climb the Wall by day and return to Longmai to relax in its indoor and outdoor hot springs. The large indoor hot spring center is done up in a tropical style with several water amusement features. Over 30 outdoor hot spring pools are scattered throughout bamboo forests.

Where: Xiaotangshan, Changping District

Tel: 6179 4673 or 4525

Web: longmai-wenquan.com

Huashuiwan Magnetic Spa Resort

Located in Shunyi district, Huashuiwan Magnetic Spa Resort is a unique natural magnetic hot spring resort. Its water is rich in minerals and popular for its purported ability to relieve rheumatism, arthritis and heart disease, in addition to improving the skin. Water is pumped from 1,800 meters below ground at a spa-ready temperature to avoid losing essential ingredients. Its exclusive

Charity

UN World Food Program gala fundraiser

The UN World Food Program's (WFP) fund raising Gala Dinner was held at the Grand Ballroom of the Swissotel Beijing October 29. The event was organized by the Embassy of Peru, Swissotel Beijing and Swissotel Lima, in collaboration with the WFP and the China Foundation for Poverty Alleviation (CFPA).

Josette Sheeran, executive director of the WFP, Harold Forsyth, the ambassador extraordinary and plenipotentiary of Peru, and Jack Breisacher, general manager of Swissotel Beijing, presented 102,000 yuan in donations to Lin Liyun, representative of the CFPA. The money will be used to feed poor students in the countryside.

Event

Centro celebrates 7th anniversary

On November 5, Centro ended its weeklong anniversary celebrations with free champagne by Moet et Chandon, stunning costumes and party music by Big City Beat from Australia and a sportswear fashion show by Porsche.

Centro offers real cocktails, fine wines, sultry music and a seductive ambiance, and is known for its fusion of five-star service, cutting-edge interior design and live entertainment. It is a place to see and be seen.

Where: Centro, 1 Guanghua Lu, Chaoyang District
Tel: 8565 2666

magnetic elements improve the physical properties of the water and are good for one's health.

Where: 99 Beigao Lu, Gaoliying Zhen, Shunyi District

Tel: 6945 6668

Web: huashuiwan.cn

Tianlongyuan Hot Spring Resort

Tianlongyuan Hot Spring Resort has the capital's biggest indoor public bathing area with an artificial beach, wave maker and medicinal springs. Its water originates 1,916 meters underground and its temperatures stay around 45 C. The water promotes circulation, eases stress and detoxifies the body. Massages are available in both public and private rooms.

Where: Dengzhuang Cun, Changping District

Tel: 8010 0088

Web: bj-tly.com



Fengshan Hot Spring Resort

Beijing Fengshan Hot Spring Resort's natural environment is the perfect place to relax. Its expansive spring area features 72 pools. The water, pumped from 3,800 meters underground, is rich in microelements and minerals. It can help relieve arthritis, nervous disorders and rheumatism.

Where: 10 Mangshan Lu, Changping District
Tel: 6071 1188 or 3847

Web: fsdj.cn

(By Sun Feng)

Chinglish story

This column focuses on Chinglish mistakes in our daily life. If you have any experiences to share, send them to Wang Yu at wangyu2008@ynet.com.

What's your cloth regulation?

By Han Manman

Lisa recently received a phone call from a US-based Fortune Global 500 company in China that told her to prepare for a face-to-face interview two days later.

Lisa was so excited, as she had been waiting for this call for nearly two months. It was her dream to join this company.

She prepared for the interview by reviewing the company's history and studying related news stories about it.

She only had one worry: her poor English. Everything will be perfect if the interviewer doesn't use English, Lisa thought.

On the big day, the interviewer asked her questions in Chinese. "I will get the job," Lisa thought, and put her mind to rest.

But just before the interview finished, the interviewer asked Lisa if she has any questions.

Lisa thought this would be a good time to show that she was at least a competent English speaker. So she said: "Well, may I know the company's cloth regulation?"

Lisa knew that different companies had different dress codes. If she didn't wear the right clothes, it would bring her trouble.

"My question will make the interviewer think I'm a professional interviewee," Lisa thought.

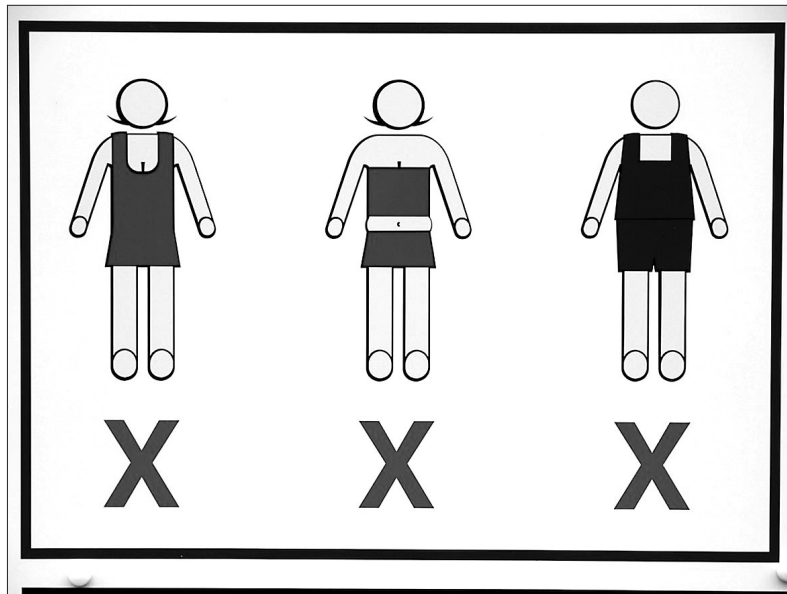
"Sorry," the interviewer replied, "can you say that again?"

"I mean, I want to know your company's cloth regulation," Lisa repeated.

"Close regulation?" What do you mean?" The interviewer looks puzzled.

Lisa began to get nervous. She pointed at her clothes and said, "I mean the rules on dressing at your company."

"Oh, you mean dress code," the inter-



viewer said, before informing Lisa that the company requires business dress from Monday to Thursday and casual dress on Friday.

Lisa got the job despite the language misstep.

"I was so lucky. Next time I cannot pretend to be wise," Lisa told me.

Back home, Lisa looked up "dress code" online.

This was the description she found on wiseGEEK, a site with answers to frequently asked questions:

Dress codes are sets of regulations governing what is and is not appropriate attire for a given setting or event.

In years past, it was easy to convey a dress code by noting that the appropriate dress would be casual, business, semi-formal, formal or black-tie. Over

the years, the relaxation of clothing options in various settings has changed, often making it necessary to further define what type of clothes are considered proper for a given situation.

The use of a dress code is common in many different settings. One of the most common is in the workplace. Offices often set a specific dress code in order to create a perception of professionalism. The idea behind the dress code is usually that if people are required to dress in a certain manner, they will conduct themselves in a more businesslike fashion. It is not unusual for an office dress code to specifically require a certain length of skirt for women, a coat and tie for men, and sometimes even the range of colors that are considered appropriate for the workplace.

Blacklist

This is a column of words or phrases commonly misused by Chinese speakers. If you're planning to be an English teacher, reporter or employee of a multinational company, then watch out for this page each week

1. Point of origin

Professor Zhu Shida (ZS): I recently came across a sentence: "The Hall of Supreme Harmony is the point of origin on the great axis of Beijing." I think the usage of "the point of origin" is wrong. We used to say, He comes from English origin. He is an Englishman by origin. This denotes that his forefathers were English and England was his mother country. The word "origin" may also denote class status; for instance, He is of worker and peasant origin. However, in the case of the sample sentence, it is not proper to use the word "origin." It involves the Chinese way of thinking. It should indeed be "the point of departure." The right way to say it should be: The Hall of Supreme Harmony is the point of departure on the great axis of Beijing.

Terry Boyd-Zhang (TBZ): I suspect that the word "origin" is in transition. It used to mean something big – native origins – as Professor Zhu has noted above, but now it seems to be used interchangeably with "start" or "beginning." I'm not sure it's just Chinese thinking, perhaps a general breakdown in the level of standard academic English, helped along by blogs and texts.

2. On which

ZS: I'm going to show you an extremely redundant sentence and tell you how to trim it and make it simpler and terser. The sentence is this: On the largest square there is the largest building, in which there is the largest platform, on which there is the highest throne, on which there was only one who could sit. The writer seems infatuated with "in which" and "on which" and does not know any other way of saying it. The result is redundancy, rhetorically very bad. Will you try to revise it and make it sound better? Let's see. We just do a little bit of surgery and it will look better: On the largest square there is the largest building, in which there is the largest platform, with the highest throne, where there was only one who could sit. So, you see that one of the important principles in English writing is avoidance of repetition. To achieve it, you have to enrich your vocabulary and sense of narrative.

TBZ: Yes, I agree that it is a vocabulary problem; I use *suiran* far too often when writing Chinese. However, it isn't just about memorizing vocabulary – it's about reading and pushing yourself to go beyond just passing the test, enriching yourself along the way.

3. Come

ZS: To come is one of the most frequently used verbs. However, if we use it too much, it will make for poor English. I have an example: The high-quality wood came from Zhejiang. The bricks came from Shandong. The metallic tiles came from Jiangsu. The granite came from Hebei. Will you get dizzy with the word "come" when it repeats itself in four successive sentences? It is bad style. Why not try to change it? First of all, we should think of the synonyms of the verb to come, such as, to originate from; to hail from. We also should think of other ways of expressing the same idea in order to diversify the usage. I would like to try to change it this way: The high-quality wood came from Zhejiang. The bricks were produced in Shandong. The metallic tiles originated from Jiangsu. The granite hailed from Hebei. Is it better?

TBZ: This is a vocabulary problem, similar to the one above. English and redundancy do not get along. Trust me, if you have used a word once, twice is too many. You need to mix it up and, if you don't know how, you need more vocabulary. Get a good dictionary and a thesaurus – there are lots online – then use them!

Chinglish on the way

This column aims to identify Chinglish in public areas. If you see any Chinglish signs, please send a picture of it to wangyu2008@ynet.com together with your name and address.

Bend Over to Evacuate

By Terry Boyd-Zhang

In light of the huge apartment building fire in Shanghai, dealing with a fire emergency is no joke. "Public Gathering-Place Safety Reminders," such as this one, frequently seen at the mall, the subway and train station, are useful. If anyone actually reads them is another question.

In Canada, we do fire safety training and fire emergency drills regularly during elementary and secondary school. In a land of wooden houses, trees and lightning, this is fairly useful information. I can count off the top of my head six serious fires I have personally witnessed. In three of them, the people involved lost everything; the three others, people were simply very lucky.

We learn about using a wet towel to cover your mouth and nose to avoid smoke inhalation. Thick smoke is hot



and rises, so you need to stay low to get out; crouching or crawling along the floor are best.

I am sure that everyone keeps a wet towel handy for this purpose. I do not and, honestly, I was too busy grabbing the baby and stuffing the cat into the carrier to bother, but, anyway, it is good

advice. "Bend over to evacuate" is the right idea, just don't pick up the soap.

If you don't know what I'm talking about, forget it. Just put out your cigarette before you, throw it out of the car window and blow out the candles before you sleep and we will all be much safer.



Movie of the week

What kind of life does an agent have after leaving the CIA? *Red*, adapted from the popular D.C. Comics graphic novels by Warren Ellis and Cully Hamner, attempts an answer.

Bruce Willis, Morgan Freeman, John Malkovich and Helen Mirren star as agents retired from the CIA, MI6 and the KGB. Though they want to live peacefully, their past has other plans.

Unlike other action movies, *Red* offers a refreshing sense of humor. The story makes sport of its ex-Cold War killers in their fight for normalcy.

Synopsis

Former CIA agent Frank Moses falls in love with Sarah, a travel agency operator he meets over the phone. But before he can meet the girl, his old employers send killers to bury the truth of a military mission that he took part in during the '80s.

Having saved Sarah, Frank tracks down his old colleagues Marvin, Joe and Victoria, to enlist their help. This time, the agents have to fight not for their country but for their right to retirement.

Scene 1

(Frank talks with Sarah, the operator of a travel agency. They have been phone friends for a long time.)

Frank (F): You start that new book?

Sarah (S): I did.

F: And what's it called?

S: Uh, it's called *Love's Savage Secret*.

F: Oh my God! Is it any good?

S: It's terrible, I love it. It's awful. It's about this fashion designer and his super-model girlfriend and they **get recruited (1)** by the CIA to stop an assassination at the Milan spring shows.

F: Well, who doesn't like Milan in the spring?

S: I guess. Anyway, I gotta do something for excitement. My landlady keeps trying to set me up with her bridge partner's kid. She just told me she thinks I'm gay.

F: I try not to judge.

S: Shut up! I'm not gay.

F: So here's something weird ... I'm actually going to be in Kansas City next week.

S: **In person (2)**? That could be a bad idea.

F: It could be ...

S: Why don't you call me when you get to town?

Scene 2

(Frank plans to break into the CIA headquarters. He comes to Ican Simanov, an old nemesis, for help.)

Ivan Simanov (I): I have to say, this is the last thing I expected when I got up this morning. I have many times dreamed of killing you. But now you are retired for a few years now.

Time passes. As we get older, things seem less important. Still, I owe you for killing Igor.

F: Igor the Butcher?

I: He was a great asset.

F: He was a pig.

I: He was my cousin.

F: I'm sorry.

(Ivan toasts.)

I: To Igor, the butcher.



F: He's not dead. I **flipped (3)** him. He owns a chain of 7-11s in Orange County. He weighs 500 pounds.

(Ivan laughs.)

I: Drink.

F: Who are we drinking to now?

I: Veronique. She was mine.

F: Impossible.

I: Yes.

F: Whatever she got, it was worth it.

I: I miss the old days. I haven't killed anyone in years.

F: That's sad.

I: But I think you are not here for the vodka.

F: I'm going to break into the CIA. I need your complete security layout of Langley. Cracks, codes, ID swipes ... all of it.

I: A favor from Frank Moses ...

Scene 3

(Frank, Joe, Sarah and Marvin go to their old colleague Victoria's.)

Victoria (V): You were lucky.

F: How'd you do it?

V: What?

F: How did you make the transition? You seem so calm, at ease ...

V: I love it. I love it here. I love the baking I love the flower arranging, I like... I like the routine.

I do get a bit restless sometimes. I take the old contract **on the side (4)**. I ... I just can't stop.

F: Oh yeah ... tell me about it.

V: You can't just flip a switch and become someone else. So ... tell me about your lady friend.

F: She makes me think that I could actually ... have a life.

Vocabulary

1. get recruited: to be selected for a job

2. in person: personally

3. flip: in this case, to turn him into a double agent

4. on the side: in addition to one's main occupation

(Wang Yu)